



ART




FOR AMATEURS
AND STUDENTS





20-60



ART, for
Amateurs and
Students: 

ART,
FOR AMATEURS AND STUDENTS.

GEORGE J. COX




DOUBLEDAY, PAGE AND COMPANY.

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Similarly, the unrivalled facilities offered by the Metropolitan Museum of New York, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and others for the photographic study of the vast field of art that is not included in Painting and Sculpture should be trumpeted throughout the remotest hamlet. Everybody to-day can have the nucleus of an art gallery at small expense—at least in tone values.

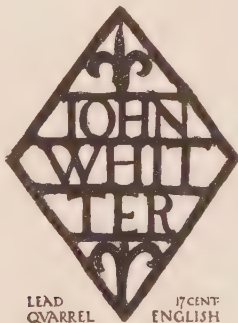
Unobtainable from any other source, some of the modern illustrations have been culled from the magazines listed below, into the pages of which flow sooner or later every worthwhile manifestation of art in the two hemispheres.

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IT IS not to those who have boldly selected a candidate or school for their suffrage that these pages are written; they are offered to those who hesitate between a dull content with academic styles and a rash choice amidst the various 'isms of to-day.

The old standards are gone, and with them the tame acceptance of pedantic dogmas. Art to-day is happily so various in its manifestations that each one may make a personal selection, though the choice is a matter of some difficulty to the amateur.

For something more than two centuries Tradition built up a dam, holding back the main current of art, which milled around in sluggish eddies.

To-day, in a hundred places, the dam is cracking. In trickles or in torrents the pent-up energies are bursting through to irrigate the desert. Who knows into what channel the main current will eventually flow—to be dammed again in some future generation when the creative urge is spent?

What I have attempted is to provide a flexible instrument with which the amateur and student may examine and appraise each characteristic phase of art—ancient or modern.

I anticipate no fatally unanimous agreement with the definitions set out in the following chapters.

The principles enlarged upon are those formulated by the late Professor Arthur W. Dow in his well-known "Composition." They are incorporated here in a form that will enable the non-professional reader to grasp with ease the fundamentals of art structure.

The chapters are intended to be progressive, leading from simple definitions toward the more sensitive generalizations that provide the only medium in which appreciation can reach its full development, or that is capable of embracing the widely divergent forms of modern art.

In the preface to an interesting monograph upon the mechanical basis of Beato Angelico's compositions occurs this exhortation: "Let us then for the love of art conduct our research with no less scientific thoroughness"—i. e., no less than that employed by the mathematician or chemist. At the other extreme we see a director of an important public gallery [the Tate] confessing in the daily press that governors "buy conservatively—not knowing what kind of art may be in vogue to-morrow." Heaven preserve us from either extremity.

What we hope to furnish in the following pages is a corridor, a halfway house, a transition, that shall leave the reader fronting the many-faceted art of to-day with some degree of confidence in his or her own judgment.

The iconoclasts of the 20th Century have done a rarely intelligent job; they have overthrown only the false gods—Græco-Roman divinities, Neo-Classic humbugs, and pretty tinsel idols of the 18th and 19th centuries. Thanks to their efforts it is not so difficult to survey the undying past and compare it with the living present.

To some readers, already habituated to startling theories, the illustrations may appear orthodox, but they should be taken in conjunction with the brief comments upon them. As for the others, I hope that after a

not-too-painful study of the text and plates, those who still cling to the bad old past will feel freed from doctrinaire or academic creeds, yet not quite despoiled of all their lares and penates. And if here and there the text smacks of advice I would apologize in the words of a prince of pedagogues, for "I give you none that is inconsistent with your pleasures."

Acknowledgments to those who have so kindly supplied illustrative material will be found at the back of the book. My thanks are due to all my colleagues in the Fine Arts Department of Teachers College.

As to those outside from whom I have borrowed ideas, it may not be invidious to mention names, but a suspicion prevails that in some quarters it might be deprecated. Specifically, the book owes its inception to the encouragement of my friend, Dr. I. L. Kandel, and I am particularly obliged to Dr. George Boas of Johns Hopkins for a criticism of the proof.

G. J. C.

Fine Arts Dept.
Teachers College.
Columbia University.







Toy Soldier and Ornaments of Lead, French 14. Century Cluny Museum.

If mankind is in revolt to-day, it is against conditions which have grown more cruel not to the body but to the soul. The real goad of human discontent is not that life is hard, but that it is not beautiful.—J. L. GARVIN.

AT FIRST sight it seemed a simple matter to write a few pertinent and pleasant pages upon a subject that holds such a persistent attraction for mankind as art.

Its all-pervasiveness, the tenacity with which it has fastened upon humanity from Cro-Magnon days, the creative urge of which it speaks and the love of beauty of which it cries aloud; all these truths should help to smooth the path of any writer intent upon assisting himself and others to a fuller joy and understanding of art.

At the outset we prayed to be delivered, in the name of art, from the didactic note; yet even in the first chapter, the pedagogue that lurks within us all rears his head to emit platitude and truism.

The trouble is that the gospel of art appreciation needs zeal, which at times begets a solemn habit not altogether calculated to convince others that beauty is its own excuse for being. But our intention is to prove that love of art is a sure guide to life, and art itself at once a medium and a tool that can fill in the gaps and round out the contours of our decidedly lopsided civilization.

This is by way of apology for any tedious patches that may follow, and a promise to confine such solemnities to this first chapter.

In any casual review of things as they are to-day, we find that despite the heartening advance in The Visual Arts made during the last decade, there are multitudes of cities and towns in which the only beauty left to us is that of the dawn or the sunset.

Countless myriads pass their lives amidst drab utilitarian things, each one of which exerts an impalpable yet cumulative and irresistible influence upon the inner being.

These myriads are tolerably nourished and adequately clothed; in the main they are housed with sanitation; yet, being more than biological specimens, they cannot live by bread alone.

Man is still a creature of moods and passions, desires and aspirations. His physical well-being and his mental health are yet bound up with the intangible things of the spirit. And it is to these incorporeal and immortal parts that Art ministers.

All very platitudinous, without a doubt, but it is neglect of such palpable truths that makes the average industrial city an eyesore from suburb to centre.

When we inquire more closely into the functions of art in everyday life we are at once impressed by the universality of its appeal.

Even the most degraded and insensitive

respond to art almost as readily as they do to music. The increasingly common malady of the "sick soul" is peculiarly susceptible to treatment by its aid.

The artist and neuropath have already established contact and have before them an impressive array of facts. We know sufficient to prove that almost every visible thing affects the subconscious for good or ill, in greater or lesser degree. It is now a commonplace of information to say that certain colours have a beneficial and others a retarding effect upon the progress of shell-shocked or nerve-shattered patients.

Cases are at times recorded in which subjects are so sensitized to the optical appeal that they experience actual nausea in the presence of ugly things; and those not such as are ordinarily repulsive to the average person.

The exact reactions of form and colour upon the mind present an interesting field for investigation by the psychologist, who is already delving into these immaterial mazes, and will doubtless solve the mystery in due course.

We may be assured that each one of us, in greater or lesser degree, is susceptible to these subtle controls. All of us, before the natural habit of self-protection calloused our æsthetic perceptions, instinctively sought beauty—stretched forth a tiny hand to grasp the sunbeam or the bubble.

Disregarding such connections, which to some may savour more of the psychic than the æsthetic, we cannot, after a glance at the history of art, deny that it is man's natural heritage.

We see it adhering to him all down the ages, an invaluable entail from his savage ancestors. Though at times, and at none more so than at present, he seems bent

upon dissipating the legacy, it clings to him still.

It coheres because life itself is still an art and not yet a mechanical formula. And in the fullest sense the plastic arts make powerful articulations with morality and religion.

The connection need not be unduly stressed, but in its recurrent rise and fall as a force in man's life it has always been a sign of spiritual health or decay.

The ages that have produced great art have been commonly marked by a parallel resurgence of the humanities. This is to be observed in Greece and even in Egypt, in mediæval Europe and Renaissance Italy.

This spirit, which refuses to be narrowed to any creed, shaped men's efforts to fine ends. The Greeks expressed it in the succinct phrase, "the good and the beautiful." The mediæval cathedral builder exercised it in a devotion which glorified God and indulged his passionate delight in craftsmanship.

Art is indeed the only form of worship that unites mankind, for all the warring sects have a common ritual here, and its practice has sent roots so deep into the texture of life that to stifle such aspirations is to jeopardize the soul.

And so art remains even to-day a religion to the artist. Though he shows scant respect for sacerdotal trappings and makes no attempt to proselytize, yet every true artist has something of the messianic fire; the fire that is rarely seen until put out.

Often ridiculed as a visionary, indulging himself in imaginary passions, he is more often a realist who refuses to be contaminated by outward forms.

For the true artist life is always a discipline. Sensing the intimate connection between the spiritual and the physical

health of man, he persists in spite of disenchantment. At his best he scorns rewards, for he has seen "the artist's vision of life as an adventure, a challenge, lovely and harsh, fleeting and strange." We speak now of the artist, not of the contriver of knick-knacks, the peddler of leaky pots or the latitudinarian bedecked in batik. He resembles these as little as he does the raffish conception of the movie manager. He believes in living life to the full but he also believes in sanity and balance, in self-imposed restraint, in order and arrangement.

Art or Beauty, or whatever term we use to denote the spirit, loathes slums and industrial deserts, ugly churches, jerry-built houses, gimcrack furniture and cheap jewellery as much as it despises empty pictures, tawdry drama, or vacant rhyme. It knows that all such things are inseparably connected, that mean streets, on the whole, breed mean citizens.

Hence the clash of the artist and the "practical man." The latter, the "progressive," hugs these things to his bosom. Steeped in the ethics of business, shaped by the traditions or a hard commercial exploitation, his taste hopelessly degraded by contact with machine-made things produced merely to sell, the "practical man" walks in a twilight that is not of the gods.

At this point the fair question will take form: What are we going to do about it all? The only thing to do is to educate the young, even if it costs something.

Another platitude, so we make haste to say that artists too should take a little interest in education and then we may be blessed with more men of the stamp of Arthur Dow or Franz Cizek.

The ideal teacher is no mistaken bigot.

He or she realizes the necessity for modern mechanical development, for mass production and labour-saving devices; is aware of the futility of the desire to return to mediæval crafts, and is too clear-sighted to indulge in romantic make-believe. In short, he is sensible of the limitations of art, yet believes that, like faith, it may move mountains.

Any observer, taking a perspective view of the last hundred years, will be convinced that the mountain begins to move already. In the last century man directed his energies toward the mastery of matter. He neglected the cathedral, but abolished the plague; whilst he dressed hideously he insisted upon sanitation.

We may observe him, brushing aside such seemingly trivial professions as the arts, embracing science with hitherto unknown ardour. After bending steam, gas, and electric energy to his will, he proceeded to delve into the mysteries of life and death. He investigates disease, discovers germs and serums, glands and functions undreamed-of before. Lastly he explores the recesses of the mind and boldly pushes on into the realms of the spirit.

As was natural, amidst all this feverish activity, Beauty stood apart and neglected. The materialistic and commercial plebs, intent upon exploiting the discoveries of the savants, attempted to prostitute her in their service, but she fled them and took refuge in the hamlets of the peasant and the tents of the savage.

Evidently conscious of his shortcomings, we observe the Victorian indulging in "Expositions" in London, Paris, Chicago, and other cities, at which art, such as it was, appears as an insipid sauce added as an afterthought to an unappetizing dish.

Cast-iron enormities, stuccoed insincerities, furniture, pottery, printing, and weaving, et al., claim kinship with art because their forms are hidden under a mass of meretricious ornament. Craft movements, divorced from actuality, wax and wane.

Meanwhile, commerce goes on piling up factory and slum and a fabulous wealth, and with wealth comes leisure, without which there can be no true appreciation. Rich men collect bric-à-brac, the antique comes into fashion, and here and there a rare plutocrat actually understands something about beauty, or at least has the sense to delegate the acquisition of his art treasures to someone who does.

Presently we observe art, often pathetically bedizened, creeping back into the homes of the rich, displacing the cast-iron fauna, the plush-covered chairs, overwrought black walnut, and cut-glass chandeliers, the overmantel, the "what-not," and the heavens know what.

And in the sphere of commerce art makes an almost unnoticed entry. Just as soon as the manufacturer had given up all hope of making a scullion of her, she reëntered the factory and put her sign upon products that seemed to have not the remotest affinity with her.

Machinery, built solely to function, put on an austere beauty directly it functioned superbly.

The manufacturer found, somewhat to his amazement, that art was not entirely divorced from utility. He observed that a pitcher which poured without dripping was usually a more finely shaped pitcher, just as an automobile with beautiful lines was a speedier automobile.

He soon discovered that a fine pattern upon a rug was as easily woven as a bad

one and sold better, so that even the dullest were put in the way of conversion.

Already great achievements are to chronicle. The engineer, whose pure science makes contact with the art of the architect, has been called in to redress the balance upset by the commercial speculator, the builder of slums and slovenly factories. We see bridges and railway terminals clothing themselves in majesty and beauty. The architect rises to the heights of his great profession, and with soaring magic transforms the skylines of the city.

At one end of the scale Chartres is replaced by the Chamber of Commerce; at the other end we see such utilities as bath taps and aluminum kettles, wash basins and window fastenings approach the simple contours and absolute fitness of the utensils of the "savage."

With but a little stretch of the imagination we may visualize the day when Art and Industry will go forward together, Industry no longer barren of beauty and Art no longer forced to live upon her patrimony.

A closer scrutiny is apt to weaken such an optimistic prediction, for man still hugs his chains, and all this filters down very slowly to the masses.

Our newspapers, with few exceptions, our posters and advertisements are still things of horror; our theatres in the main are decorated in execrable taste. Though our furnishings become more comely and our stores more stuffed with rich goods, we may still travel many miles of city streets and see little to gladden the eye or lift the heart. Now that wishes are flivvers, it is high time that art was also put within the reach of the poor man.

There is little cause for unctuous satisfaction when we think how man has de-

clined from the Parthenon to the Pit Head, being so hard put to it that he extracts a sad consolation from the desolate beauty, compound of mist and smoke and plangent sun, that mercifully weaves about the hideous freight yard or the mining town.

But the spirit of beauty cannot be interminably enmeshed, and the times seem ripe for a change.

Yet only those who work with something of the Franciscan spirit can hope to assist in the conversion. The apostles of art need tough hides as well as sensitive souls. Philistines sit in the seats of the mighty. Men dead to every æsthetic thrill are to be encountered in academic halls.

The utilitarian must be shown the dollar mark without which, to his limited intellect, no product is genuine. Inertia and indifference must be faced, and no practical application is to be despised. Yet the abounding good and lasting worth of art appreciation for both old and young is that it points out a lovelier way to life.

It gives to all a means of living more beautifully and more abundantly.

And now, having assigned such a lofty rôle to art, I would in turn disavow any claim to usher in the millennium at the end of the book.

Love of art, like any other, extracts an occasional penalty for the boons it grants, and appreciation and enjoyment are not to be had for the asking. Pleasures must be earned before they can be tasted.

The following chapters are but endeavours to point out certain immutable laws and establish certain definite standards. There is no attempt to write around the various illustrations or give egregious explanations. The reader sensitive to beauty can dis-

pense with the aid of a critic solely intent upon expressing himself in luxuriant prose.

Finally there is no design to standardize rules and ignore the personal equation that will always assert itself, often with advantage and always with justification.

You will not always like the things I admire, nor I altogether appreciate the works you care for supremely, for happily it is ". . . ordained for each one spot should prove beloved over all."

A world agreed to accept the rulings of any one authority, school or critic—of which eventuality there is not the slightest reason to fear—such a world would deprive itself of much diverse colour and richness, and of much helpful argument.

There is not, nor can there be, any set formula for judging things that must be felt as much as understood. Yet given an understanding of art structure we shall neither of us display unseemly emotion over a magazine cover, mistake the sentimental for the æsthetic appeal, or confuse subject with interpretation and tolerate again the saccharine inanities of the 19th Century.

All that is claimed for art structure is that it provides an æsthetic tonic to tide one over the period of growing pains in the study of art. It purifies the taste, strengthens the understanding, and enriches life itself. That is all it can do; and it is enough.

If instead of a respect for unwritten and unwriteable laws we substitute an attorney-like search for flaws, or seek interpretations that regard the letter and not the spirit, we shall wear art structure threadbare and only succeed in stripping art of all mystery and power.



To define beauty, not in the most abstract, but in the most concrete terms possible, to find not a universal formula for it, but the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it, is the aim of the true student of æsthetics.—WALTER PATER.

When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

—KEATS.

Truth is the shattered mirror strown
In myriad bits; while each believes
His little bit the whole to own.—BURTON.

THE answer to the question, What is beauty? has had throughout the ages a rich variety of definition. Beauty, itself immortal and protean, has assumed by turns a classic purity, a Byzantine austerity, and a Gothic animation, but its light illuminated the workers of the early Renaissance much as it lighted, though with less brilliance, the path of the colonial craftsmen of America. The more it changed down the centuries the more it remained the same thing. To Phidias and Michael Angelo beauty was deified in the human form. Suger worshipped beauty in a vast cathedral, much as a Sung potter loved it in an exquisite bowl, Constable in a quiet landscape, an Indian in a patterned blanket.

In all its manifold ebullitions it is the expression of man's joy in life, his ecstasy in creation.

The answer to the question will then depend upon time and place, and no exactitude

is possible, but a knowledge of art structure will enable us to recognize the kindred attributes of beauty running through Occidental and Oriental art, as through Polynesian and North American craft work.

They who instinctively react to fine art need no definition, but the vast number of potential converts must be given some description of the characteristics of beauty.

A slight examination of previous definitions emphasizes the futility of any attempt to be didactic.

The wise men who in the past have debated the question have defined it in various forms, moulded by their philosophies and coloured by the ideals of their times. The Greeks of the 5th Century B.C. could conceive of no beauty without order, balance, and arrangement. Plato in his discourses links together the good and the beautiful. He indicates a belief in the mechanical basis of beauty.

In the Middle Ages men, under the powerful stimulus of the Church and religion, manifested their understanding of beauty in countless ways, but were little given to writing upon æsthetics. About 1600 A.D. we find Bacon writing, "There is no excellent beauty that hath not a strangeness in the proportion." That seems a happy definition, for beauty is at the opposite pole from the commonplace. Goethe says in effect that words are inadequate to express the meaning of beauty, but insists that attempts to do so help the understanding.

Schopenhauer has recorded some clear thoughts upon the subject, though he, like all the others, cannot exactly define such an evasive quality. He says that all things, in nature, animate or inanimate, are beautiful if we can look upon them objectively. Association of thought sometimes hinders the perception of beauty; that we derive pleasure and enjoyment from the beautiful—apart from any connection it has with our personal aims; that we can appreciate only through our intelligence, not through our will.

The psychologist says that a thing is beautiful through its harmony with our senses. In short, it moves and thrills us inasmuch as we can enter into its spirit. The modern expert in æsthetics is inclined to hold the opinion that the eyes and instincts alone understand and appreciate art. Each investigator gives us some clue and all together help to build up a truthful definition of that elusive yet palpable thing we call beauty. Happily, we do not need to worry about the psychology of beauty, all we need to be able to do is to apprehend it, and proclaim it when we see it; and, not less, to condemn its absence. Yet there are so many who are insensitive, who are not moved or pleased in the presence of things beautiful, it is imperative that those who can feel its power should be able to explain, as clearly as may be, just what arrangements of line and form, tone and colour have for them particular significance; even, if possible, to indicate something of their reactions.

Then we must also remember that some may react to trivial art, as to poor music or doggerel verse, and so at first, at the risk of dullness, we shall have to stress those qualities for which we must look, and without

which a picture or a statue, a rug or a vase, though faultlessly made and technically perfect, may fail to reach the standards of fine art.

The definitions that are given in the following pages are advanced in the hope of clearing up elementary doubts as to fundamentals.

With those incorruptibles who boldly state that they "know what they like" (to whom, variously, Turner, Whistler, and Gauguin replied, "So does a cow") and those perfervid emotionalists to whom a rule is a rank affront, we have no concern; to the intelligent amateur who has already developed the faculty of appreciation some apology for rudimentary definitions may be at times necessary. But they are intended for those who admit, without shame, a deficiency in their understanding of the plastic arts—just as I candidly confess to an entire ignorance of counterpoint, hydrodynamics, and lots of other things—who at the same time are interested enough to run through these rudiments of art before posting on to more attractive definitions and developments.

Lines and shapes and tones are comparatively simple matters to deal with; things may be asserted about them with some show of authority. It is the intangible and emotional qualities, growing out of the infinite variety of arrangements of these elements, which we can only apprehend when we are convinced of the need for such arrangements, that are subject to no rules.

Roerich's formula for the judgment of beauty is: "Through intuition, upon the basis of many personal experiences, without conventionalities or prejudices." Our definitions are for those who have let intuition languish, as so many must.

"Rules," says Robert Henri, "are only for mechanics"; our rules are for the artisan who will develop into a robust art lover.

Always we must remember the spirit: as the mathematician, building upon fictitious quantities, arrives at truth, conversely we build out of rudimentary truths the intangible thing called beauty. It is at all times necessary to liberate and restore intuitions that have been overlaid and stifled, and if we look upon our rules as crutches for crippled perceptions, these will the sooner be found to take flight unaided.

On top of all the rules must be the spirit, the imagination; those impalpabilities of which fine art is all compact.* "Tell me where is fancy bred, Or in the heart or in the head?" In his sonnets Shakespeare makes a shrewd guess at the seat of some at least of the emotions ordinarily stirred by beauty. Artists are still questing and doubting.

How many artists have wondered and questioned where art has its home and have striven hard to re-create beauty in their own works. All have come to the conclusion that beauty can be called forth only by the imagination. The imagination that reaches down into the essence of things—not the sight that sees only the surface qualities, pleasing though these may be. Keats in his poetry repeatedly links beauty and truth. In a letter he writes: "What the imagination seizes as beauty must be truth." Artist and poets alike mean the inner and abiding truth.

To give our first simple illustration: if an artist wishes to paint or carve a lion he may go to a museum of natural history—too frequently he does—and study mounted speci-

mens. But his presentation will surely be that of mere stuffed skin. He may make sketches at the zoo, and so achieve more "lifelike" results, but danger lies there also, for superficial traits or anatomical detail alone will fail hopelessly to conjure up an idea of the power and majesty of the king of beasts in the mind of the spectator. To convey the suggestion of latent strength, of springing muscle, of claw and fang, he must study the lion at first hand. The ancient Assyrian, who hunted the lion with bow and spear, knew how to depict him with spirit in his bas-reliefs.

We do not suggest that to give adequate expression to the subject the artist must go lion-hunting. But he must be thinking of those qualities that are typical of feline power and ferocity, rather than of mane and muscle, wrinkles and skin. He has the whole of art history to study, and yet how many modern lions lack the simple directness, the "terrific" qualities of an heraldic "leopard," whose creator had probably never seen a lion yet cherished a clear conviction of leonine qualities and was not hampered with ideas about truth to nature. This is a digression, but it is this insistence upon the spirit of the thing and not upon the letter that is one of the chief attributes of beauty or art. Before summing up with an attempt lightly to define beauty, we will try to answer another hackneyed phrase that springs automatically to the lips of those who do not understand or else derive little joy from art.

That query invariably takes this form, "What good is it?" The answer is, frankly, "None, to the questioner, or to those sharing his point of view." When you read those lines from Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn," at the top of this chapter, you did not demand

*The serious student, who desires something more than this slight examination of an elusive and baffling quality, might begin with Bosanquet's "History of Æsthetic."

that they do something tangible or practical for you. If you are sensitive to beauty they pleased you, coloured your thoughts more glowingly, left you, spiritually, a little—even if never so little—refreshed. That was their justification, and beauty needs none other. Music, poetry, art, none contributes directly to our physical and material well-being. All we can say is that the non-corporeal part of man, the psychic element, is better for having read or heard or seen a noble poem, a lovely strain of music, or a work of fine art. Only a Philistine will demand more. Schopenhauer has a charming little parable in which he likens the rôle of the fine arts in life to that of the poppy, the cornflower, and the daisy amidst the long stems of the wheat. But for their presence there would be only a wilderness of stalks. The farmer may justly take exception here, but the poet would agree. Primarily the function of art is to increase the joy of living.

Yet as nothing stands alone, so too beauty in art has its declensions. It falls insensibly by degrees from what are termed the fine arts—architecture, painting, sculpture, to the practical arts—through tapestry, furniture, pottery, metal work, printing, etc.—we are gradually led to the articles of everyday use, and it is there that the art enthusiast may make contact with the practical man, for each of these things may have in them something of the quality of fine art, i.e., beauty. Through such things the teacher and the pupil may work upon the mass of incomprehension that confronts them in their everyday contacts. They may attack the problem from the bottom as well as the top. Many people who readily admit a lack of finer appreciation in regard to poetry, who freely confess to having “no ear for music,”

are nevertheless inclined to presume that the possession of normal sight automatically enables them to judge a work of art. With them not only is seeing believing, but understanding also. They forget that their critical faculties have too frequently fallen into disuse and that their perception of beauty is overgrown and distorted by a film of wrong opinions or ideas painfully acquired from books, professors, and everyday contacts. As J. Harvey Robinson has so convincingly demonstrated it is, unhappily, the wrong ideas to which we cling most obstinately, for none of us likes to discard things we toiled for, nor do we like to admit that we have cherished false notions. We must ourselves approach the study of art appreciation with an open mind and try to insure a like attitude in others.

To sum up; beauty is inherent in all created things, but the artist, despite long-held beliefs, does not “hold up a mirror to nature.” The camera has at last taught him the futility of that. He seeks to interpret nature or he seeks to embody, in painting, sculpture, architecture, and the crafts, ideas and ideals which have stirred his finer feelings. Poetry, it has been said, is “Emotion remembered in tranquillity”—and the beauty sought by the artist has the same quality, though expressed in two or three dimensions in many different materials. To the artist, beauty consists in a *fine arrangement of line and tone, mass and colour*. It may be discovered in a simple brush drawing in line or in a noble orchestration of all these elements. It depends not upon the subject treated but upon its treatment. It may be felt in an abstract composition of shapes and tones. It may be absent from a very cleverly painted landscape or an accurate study of a beautiful figure. A photo-

graph may have fine art qualities, just as a faithful imitation in paint may lack every quality of art.

Beauty is essentially of the spirit, liberated and living, and refuses to submit to exact diagnosis, but we may train our faculties to apprehend it.

It is, as Michael Angelo said, a kind of music, but it stirs no chords in those who ask first for a beautiful subject and are blind

to the manner and style of the artist's interpretation. Throughout our studies, we must keep that in mind, and try to sensitize ourselves to the appeal of fine lines and shapes, of beautiful notan* and colour. An understanding of these essential qualities is a prerequisite to art appreciation.

*Notan is the Japanese name for Light-Dark and was first used by Professor Dow to distinguish the pattern of light and dark as opposed to light and shade.





The true purposes of art teaching is the education of the whole people for appreciation.—
ARTHUR WESLEY DOW.

IN THIS chapter we intend to discuss more fully those all-important qualities of Line and Space and Light-and-Dark or, as we shall in future term it, Notan. Unless a drawing or a painting, a piece of sculpture, or any architectural group possesses fine line, fine space, and fine notan, beauty or a true art quality will be lacking.

Before examining each of these qualities in detail we must digress a little to explain why it is that to-day we consider poor so much painting and sculpture that but a few years ago was looked upon as the work of genius. The reason lies primarily in their lack of any fine quality of line, space, and notan, and the cause of such deficiency is easily explained. For three hundred years or more, since the High Renaissance, artists have been, almost invariably, trying to imitate nature or work in the classic tradition. There were artists who accomplished great work despite its shackles, as Claude and Poussin. Others like Lancret and Watteau at times show flashes of a style that owes but little to the Schools. An outstanding figure like El Greco allows his personality free rein.

But, to summarize baldly, for three centuries schools rise and fall, all of them, whether Classical, Artificial, Romanticist, Naturalistic, Imitative or Realistic, out of

touch with the true traditions of Art; all of them mostly concerned with outward forms or content with second-hand styles.

In the late 18th Century, Blake, who used to design his figures rather than copy them from life, sensed the falseness of this imitative method. In an age when the majority of artists were preoccupied with neo-classic futilities or engaged in the production of dull transcripts of nature, he stated bluntly that copying the model was not art. But the mass of artists required another full hundred years before they saw the truth of Blake's simple assertion. They went on intent upon imitating nature, or using formulas ready to hand, and in the majority of cases neglected all the essentials of beauty in the pursuit of a wrong ideal. So universal was the habit and so ingrained is the tradition—which is, by modern artists, termed academic—that even now many artists, and more who are not artists, feel quite aggrieved or even insulted when any one suggests that a faithful portrayal of facts is not art. Many of the artists who worked in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries were possessed of a very great genius—and we shall always admire their works; but on the whole the academic ideal was false, and undoubtedly it has been the cause of the decadence of art. Other things, such as neglect of all other methods of expression for that of painting and sculpture, a stupid estimation

of the crafts, and also of the industries into which art largely enters—and a decay of the schools and guilds; all these causes also contributed to the decline.

A little thought will convince us that truth to nature means to the artist something quite other than a photographic presentation, for which purpose the modern artist feels a camera is more suited than the human eye and hand. We know that even when an artist is striving consciously to copy a landscape he does modify and select forms. He eliminates unnecessary details and attempts to “compose” his trees, sky, and other features, such as animals or figures, should they be introduced into his landscape. He does much the same in figure painting; he groups his figures and thinks of line arrangements.

All will concede that this is the first step in composition. The modern artist contends that this should be carried still further. That the picture should be so designed or organized that there will be in it an abiding art quality quite irrespective of the subject. He demands first that a painting or a sculptured form shall be fine in line and light-and-dark.

The Japanese and Chinese never forgot this, and many of their early landscape artists achieved this fine arrangement in their drawings. It is this same accomplishment on the part of Cotman which ranks him, in the estimation of many artists, as superior to Turner as a master of composition. It is the reason why we prefer Claude Lorraine to Van Ruisdael and rate Paul Potter so much more highly than Rosa Bonheur or Landseer.

To keep for a little to a comparison of landscape painting, an artist does occasionally find that nature has arranged herself in a manner to suit all the requirements of a

fine picture, so that, as in Corot's landscapes, only a little adjustment seems necessary. But Corot himself acknowledged the necessity for simplification, for he painted usually in the morning when the mists were still softening outlines and separating masses. He said that the noonday sun disclosed too much.

The modern artist, however, does not always choose a subject that is already beautiful; he is ambitious to find and depict beauty in scenes that are not “picturesque.” He attempts to seize upon the beauty of which he is conscious and by so arranging his lines and masses, tones and colours, hopes that they will by their movement and interplay suggest something of his inner feelings as he regarded his subject.

The conventional artist looks upon a landscape painting more as a pictorial map-making. He imagines that a faithful rendering of optical effects will stimulate emotions similar to those felt by himself as he painted the scene. When seeking to arouse our emotions the poet goes about his work very differently. In rhythmic and moving words he shapes images which excite our thoughts and kindle our imagination. He does not attempt a careful description of the events or objects which moved him to compose his verse.

The modern artist has something of the same intent: he seeks to touch responsive chords within our natures, not to play merely upon optic nerves. The inspired artist does this almost unconsciously, the uninspired will never achieve it. The academic artist merely paints trees and hills and clouds, and is only concerned with copying the tree with its leaves and bark, the hills with their fields and rocks, and the sky with its big and little clouds, hoping to make them look real. The

artist of the later school will seek not surface qualities but structural values. He will strip his trees of all but essential shapes and lines of growth, he thinks of the eternal qualities of hills, their mass and weight, not merely geological formations and topographical detail. These are the two extremes, and we shall always find intermediate types. Naturally it will not be so easy to understand a picture painted in what is called the post-impressionist manner as to grasp the meaning of a realistic or orthodox landscape, for all of us are instinctively conventional, and new ways of painting antagonize us as readily as do different ways of thinking or strange modes of dress. But those who are mentally alert will at least try to understand the modernist landscape or any other work of art by sincere artists of to-day. The effort is worth making, for the beauty of the fine post-impressionist picture is abiding, and grows more apparent with time, whereas the other merely depends upon a passing mood, which if fixed soon becomes tedious.

When we see a picture of any kind that we do not like we should be tolerant enough at least to admit that it may be because we do not understand it, and to make an attempt to do so before condemning it. And it is just here where lies the importance of those principles of line and space and notan. We cannot appreciate to the full a fine picture nor confidently condemn a bad one unless we have faith in our judgment, and an assurance that our method of looking at a picture and criticizing it is right. For that reason alone, we must first understand what is meant by good line, fine notan, and later colour. There is also, it is to be remembered, the not inconsiderable increase of enjoyment and permanent pleasure that will derive from such an understanding.

Let us recollect from the outset that we cannot be dogmatic about it. Though we can readily tell good from bad and the less good from the mediocre, yet few have the trained appreciation that can afford to adopt an omniscient or contemptuous attitude. It is probable that few Occidentals have an appreciation for Oriental art as keen as that of the cultured Chinese or Japanese who encouraged or produced it. But our faculties may be developed. Often those who commence with a distaste or a lack of interest in Eastern art forms find that, given an understanding of line and notan, their regard for it grows, and grows naturally at the expense of their earlier and mistaken liking for realistic art. To those of you who are already upon the right road to appreciation, such things will be apparent, and their elaboration seem tedious, but they are restated for the benefit of those who have yet to be convinced.

Pictures divide up, broadly, into two classes, those that are illustrations and those that are decorations; those that give a pictorial record of facts and those that are composed with a regard for first principles, i.e., line and notan. Many will like a picture for the story it tells, but if it lacks the essential qualities it may be twenty yards long and ten yards high and yet be merely an illustration. On the other hand, it may be, to those who demand facts, but one square foot of unintelligible line and colour arrangement, and yet rank as fine art.

Remembering the difficulty and stupidity of being too positive, we shall realize that these extremes merge together toward the centre, and we cannot draw a hard-and-fast line between them. An illustration in a magazine may have all the finer qualities and yet give an adequate idea of the scene

or things depicted (Turner's "Liber Studiorum" and Daumier's illustrations), and a big historical fresco may lack everything but a certain mechanical skill in drawing and painting. To illustrate this point, the well-known picture of Washington Crossing the Delaware in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York is considered very bad art by artists. The fact that it depicts a great and noble character and a splendid episode inclines all who take a just pride in American history to view it subjectively. This prevents a balanced judgment of it as a work of art. Actually it is but an illustration, and not a very good one at that. Even as a truthful presentation of facts it is sadly astray, and there is an unreal and theatrical atmosphere about it. But we should not for that reason condemn it in unthinking terms or in a manner to hurt the susceptibilities of those innocent souls who are really reacting to their ideas of patriotism or their appreciation of and regard for Washington's great qualities. Respect for such things are, we know, essential to the well-being of any nation, and such themes most worthy to inspire poets and artists.

If we antagonize those who mistakenly react to subject and not interpretation, we are not likely to make converts. We can be better employed in showing them how nobly Hokusai treated such themes in his cheap

prints of the glories of old China and Japan. It has been well said that it is not the material that makes art; neither is it the subject. The great artist may take humble or even ignoble matter, and by his power over his medium and his realization of essentials he may translate such things into works of great art. Japanese prints and Dutch Genre abound in such treatments. Cézanne was far happier depicting cardplayers than classical themes and modern art delights to take an "ugly" subject and organize it in a fine manner.

Historical pictures are notoriously bad art. Indeed, the more lofty his subject the less likely the artist seems to be able to attain success with it. Only in great ages, such as the Periclean, have artists achieved complete success with great themes, and there will always be certain subjects that are unpaintable, and only to be apprehended in epic form. But we can end this digression with one indisputable assertion, when we say that no artist can succeed who thinks more of his subject matter than of its interpretation.

We have now said enough to emphasize the danger of looking first for a fine or pretty subject if we are in earnest in the pursuit of appreciation. Let us get down to the examination of line and space and notan.



Eighteenth Century Cabinet-Makers Plane: English ~2



17 Century Playing Cards and 15 Century Ale Pitcher

Teaching is only of whither and how to go.
The vision is the work of him who hath willed
to see.—PLOTINUS.

LINE, in its simplest form, is seen in the brush work of the Chinese and Japanese. It deals there with outlines and contours, with lines of structure and those expressive of movement. We see it in such things as the growth of a tree, the movement of a fish through the water, or the contour of hills, in waves or clouds or costumes. In the drawing of a head or the silhouette of a cathedral, we speak of line or contour. It is present in a Gothic statue or an Indian bowl. Successful pictures are built up upon a series of lines, not always visible—in bad pictures lines of composition are either absent or so weak that they do not function, or perhaps so insistent that they become mannered. Only a careful examination and a thoughtful comparison will enable us to determine where mannerism creeps in to the detriment of quality. Some of the painters of the Renaissance, some Gothic sculptors, and many Japanese artists use lines in a strongly marked and easily recognizable way, which is yet individual and fine. But usually any noticeable sameness about line indicates weakness or poverty of ideas. Lines have other functions than those of defining outlines or contours, or giving direction—they cut up the field into shapes or spaces. Therefore, good line and good space, the

fundamental and primary qualities of any work of art, are very closely connected.

The illustrations will give a fair idea of what we mean.

Fine spacing, dependent upon line arrangement,¹ consists of a beautiful organization of shapes within the painted or decorated field. We use not only our eyes but our feelings to appreciate such things. We instinctively say that certain lines or shapes are ugly or pretty, even if we have no great appreciation of beauty. If we start to analyse such things our understanding and appreciation grow. We admire the suggestion of strength and facility in a line, and dislike uncertainty or weakness. We respond to an orderly arrangement of shapes and are repelled by confusion. We find that any fine drawing has power and freedom in its line and a satisfying, though usually not obvious, organization of its shapes.

The illustrations show subjects in which these qualities are present or absent. From such beginnings we may build up our sensitivity to fine line and space, using every bit of material we can find to emphasize these necessary things. The simple lines of an Indian bowl may be compared with the stupid contours of a 19th Century vase. Chinese pottery of the Sung and Ming period may be contrasted with the faience of Sèvres. (We need not consider the decoration in such illustrations, for this is added, and does not

enter into line problems.) Japanese and Chinese ink drawings may serve as examples of fine line, or drawings by such masters as Leonardo or Botticelli or Holbein. A fine understanding of line and space is apparent in everything made by the ancient Greeks, but we might at first confine our attention to their temples, and such details as capitals and mouldings, and to their pottery.

We see magnificent examples of line and space in Gothic cathedrals, though here we can with advantage substitute the word "mass" for "space." In the placing of their masses the Gothic builders show to what heights fine spacing may be carried, and their arrangement of such details as windows and doors is done in a masterly manner; it is all fine spacing. The architects of the modern skyscrapers often show like qualities and are the first to acknowledge the debt they owe to the often nameless geniuses who planned and built the mediæval cathedrals, and showed such superb judgment in the arrangement of their lines and masses.

We cannot say that one line is ugly and another beautiful, one space fine and another unsightly, until they belong to some definite organization, for everything depends upon the relative position and proportions of such lines and spaces within a composition, whether the frame be a building or a vase, a rug or a picture.

Spacing, good or bad, in its most elementary form is discovered in such humble fabrics as shirtings, tartans, gingham, and other striped goods. Greek vases and Persian pots show beautiful choices in the use of horizontal bands wherewith to break up the field of the vessel, and from such sources we may proceed upward to the portico of a temple or the façade of a church.

Good spacing of such simple units as

horizontal and vertical lines in turn leads to the right placement of ornament. We see the pleasant spotting of free brushwork between bands on vases giving a spirited light-and-dark. The shadows thrown by the cornices, portico, doors, and windows of a building are in the same way the result of fine selection and proportion and placement of the various lines of the composition, and lead to fine *notan*.

But we have said enough to convince the open-minded of the vital need for such things as fine line and space in any work of art, and of the fallacy of looking for fine subjects rather than fine treatments.

Line, space, light-and-dark, and colour—that is the order in which it is best to study works of art. We may now go on to *notan*. Fine *notan* may be discovered in the opposing masses of light and dark in a Mexican jar or a Greek vase. It may be seen in a still life of Cézanne or in one of Rembrandt's portrait groups. But light-and-shade, by which we refer to the accidental light and shadows cast upon objects by the sun or artificial light, does not mean the same thing as *notan*. Light-and-shade may be used, as Rembrandt often used it in his famous paintings, to serve the purpose of a fine light-and-dark arrangement, or it may actually constitute fine *notan*, as in the sculpture from the Parthenon. But we must beware of mixing the terms. One of the primary causes of the decay of painting has been the artist's mistaken evaluation of light-and-shade, a mistake bound up with his false ideal of "truth to nature." In giving the shadows of his subjects he lost the substance, just as in an attempt to reproduce external qualities he lost the spirit, of art. It is not difficult to realize what *notan* is, but it is less easy to recognize it. We must

refer again and again to the illustrations.

The most direct examples of notan in two values are to be seen in such things as Coptic embroideries or linoleum cuts, in Greek vases and Chinese pottery or carving. Wash or sepia drawings by old masters both Eastern and Western will lead us on to more subtle arrangements of light-and-dark into which more than two values enter. Japanese prints, Chinese paintings and screens, the Italian primitives, Persian rugs, Modernist painting, Aztec sculpture. Indeed, there is no limit to the field from which we may gather our illustrative material. The chief point is to proceed steadily, from the simple to the complex, and to appreciate as we go, sticking at first to strongly contrasted examples so that other qualities of tone and colour may not confuse our ideas.

Our primary aim is to develop a true sense of values; to distinguish fine notan from commonplace arrangements of light-and-dark. In the formation of such an appreciation, we must necessarily be swayed by the judgment of history. For though popular verdicts are usually hasty or mistaken, and though the most arrogant critic may fail in understanding, the judgment of the ages does gradually winnow the grain from the chaff. Historical perspective is a great aid to a sound estimate of true values. We are not here speaking of collectors' or dealers' values, which are invariably based on fashion or artificial inflations and have usually but a remote connection with æsthetics. We mean the values implied in the verdict of cultivated opinion, as rendered by artists and critics and intelligent and enthusiastic amateurs. The study of such admittedly fine examples leads us to an appreciation of fine notan, and to a better understanding of modern art.

We cannot define notan with the precision

of a mathematical formula; all we can do is to point out its presence in fine work and note its absence in poor work, whether it be a temple or a chair, in weaving or on pottery, in sculpture or painting. All we can say is that in excellent examples of notan we get beautiful and subtle adjustments of light and dark shapes, a stimulating and pleasing arrangement of light areas and dark areas. If we try to analyze it closely we find that in fine work there is a vigorous and lively style, an absence of weakness or indecision in the spotting in of the blacks that speak of a bold and masterly handling. But that does not go far to explain it, though it makes us more conscious of the lack of such qualities. If we examine Corot's landscapes, we may note the effective way in which the slender dark trees cut across the major patch of light, also how small interesting shapes of light are well placed amid the larger masses of dark. This gives us something tangible to work upon. If we take Rembrandt's pictures and eliminate all representational features—such as faces, hands, etc.—we still have a magnificent pattern of light-and-dark, a very skillfully contrived arrangement of notan. A still more convincing experiment would be to take a fine example, say from the Italian primitives, and make a careful study of it, then make a drawing and attempt to alter the relative values or positions of the light and dark shapes. The result is almost invariably to destroy the distinction and charm of the original.

In all splendid examples, whether from the fine arts or their equally worthy parents, the crafts, we find a sound organization of notan, consisting of a balance and contrast, an opposition and interplay of shapes and tones that have an orchestral quality, and a power to charm and please analogous to that of music.



In the end it will all depend upon the power a man has in himself; and just as no food or medicine will bestow or take the place of vital energy, so no book or study can give a man a mind of his own.—SCHOPENHAUER.

IN THE preceding paragraph, we mentioned Balance and Opposition among other secondary principles that enter into the composition of fine pictures or temples, beautiful statuary, pottery or textiles.

We need to examine into their origins and applications. Such an investigation is essential for the art student, and with the majority of people it helps toward an understanding and a fuller appreciation and enjoyment of art.

This leads us into another digression, speculative yet interesting, as to how far such principles of composition were consciously understood by the old masters of antiquity and the Middle Ages.

Penrose has shown how the subtle almost imperceptible curves of the Parthenon—the Echinus, Entasis, Stylobate, and Entablature may be reduced to mathematical ratios. Undoubtedly the Greeks had a very clear idea of what they wanted to do when planning a temple. Unfortunately, they have left no record of such formulas. Recently the late Professor Hambidge devised a system, which he called Dynamic Symmetry, built upon the proportionals of rectangles and their diagonals. Very few artists accepted it as a working basis, and such examples of

art as have been produced by its aid seem set and formal and lacking in freedom, a criticism that may be directed at certain Greek temples or vase shapes. A Scandinavian, Architect, F. Macody Lund, in his "Ad Quadratum," has also produced a system into which circles, rectangles, and triangles enter; by which he claims that mediæval architects reduced the designing of cathedrals to a science.

The late Professor Dow, whose work in art education has left a lasting impress upon American schools and whose influence is felt as far off as China and Japan, contended that art can never be scientific. His attitude was that one should seek first principles without forgetting those imponderables that go to the completion of a work of art—that spirit or genius, without which any art form lacks life. His contention was that in getting back to first principles and rediscovering the beaten tracks followed by the old masters, great and small, we were more likely to recapture the vision which they so clearly had, and which has been almost completely lost sight of in the last three hundred years. And this seems a sane and intelligent way of looking at things, for obviously art is not science. Any set of laws, to produce art, must be flexible and living, susceptible to adjustments in each age. Art leans toward freedom of expression, untrammelled choice of line and shape; emotion and imaginative power are called into play as in

poetry and music. What we should remember is that transitions occur all down the line; that one form emerges from a preceding form and enters into another, often with imperceptible gradations. Bridge-building is a pure science often resulting in splendid forms which are only obscured by added decoration. Architects must make a definitely intellectual approach to the problems of modern construction; but they temper the coldness of such methods with a regard for fine design. The landscape architect moves trees and rocks, and deflects streams with but small regard for science—if we except arboriculture and the law of gravity—but he has a thorough understanding of fine line and good placement and a knowledge of perspective and its implications. A sculptor is more trammelled than a painter in placing his masses, but both are comparatively free agents if we contrast their technique with that of a designer of furniture. The emotional and the scientific approach to art have both been widely broadcast of late, and we have to realize the dangerous enthusiasm of a man with a theory, a zeal which is likely to brush aside all others that do not confirm to the true belief. But no one system yet devised will produce art or imbue art students with artistry, nor will mere reading give one appreciation. It will, however, help toward understanding, and assist in tearing down some of the rank fallacies that have so overgrown the structure of art since the High Renaissance.

All of us, whatever our private theories, admit that the old fellows who made Greek vases or Gothic cathedrals, Sicilian brocades or Windsor chairs knew much more about art structure than we do to-day, and instead of so much vocal dispute about æsthetics we can be more profitably employed in search-

ing out the secrets of their success, and probing down to the laws that, consciously or unconsciously, they all obeyed. We assuredly agree with Bacon, who said, apropos of painting, that an artist "must do it by a kind of felicity as a musician composes a piece of music." But this does not presuppose an undisciplined and emotional approach to our art problems. And again, that inability to draw clear lines of demarcation must not be lost sight of. Thomas Burt, in the "Memoirs of a Wheelwright," tells us how the old-time artisan made his wheels by instinct or rule of thumb, knowing to a shade the size and camber of spokes, the right size of felloes, hub, or tire, so that he produced a wheel which was finely shaped yet adequate for its purpose. The old chair maker, turning his wood upon a foot lathe, had this same gift, so that to-day we collect their ancient chairs and treasure them as works of art in museums. This innate sense of fine line and proportion was a sort of instinct that had its roots in tradition and derived its strength from the old custom of apprenticeship in the crafts. We see it descending throughout the ages. Gothic cathedrals went through the same development as chairs and tables. We note the massive and heavy Romanesque giving place to the slender upshooting Gothic. As the old builders gained experience their forms increased in beauty until, as seems inevitable, facility obscured taste and Gothic purity of line took on a flamboyant and restless character only arrested by a change of style.

These old masters were so concerned with works that they left no writings upon the subject of their labours. Whether they had a system is doubtful, but we do know that the average prelate or educated layman in the Middle Ages was capable of designing his

own house or church or making fit and comely additions to buildings already in existence. Not only that, but the masons and carpenters of those days had an innate taste which for centuries put a curb on their uncommon technical skill, so that craftsmanship and fine art were blended into a splendid whole. We see something of the same happy consummation in early American history. Gentlemen in Virginia designed their own stately homes and had apparently no difficulty in finding artisans of right feeling to carry out their ideas. To-day such achievements are impossible.

What has happened is that the mechanical revolution has interposed an impenetrable wall between those ages of fine taste and the times in which we move. The handicrafts have decayed and the machine has crushed out of the workman of to-day all feeling for beauty. The fine arts, nourished in the fertile soil of the crafts, inevitably decayed with them.

We cannot recreate the handicrafts that were the nurseries of great artists. What we can do is to attempt to get back to those first principles which upon examination we see so clearly in the works of the old masters, great and small, and which, whether they were conscious or unconscious of them, they felt and expressed in all their productions. All this, of course, if but too trite and true, but many have yet to be convinced of the necessity for revising their æsthetic standards. Whether even a regard for first principles will eventually produce living art without a revival of arts and crafts is a moot point. We cannot think that systems and formulas will succeed in doing so. The question as to their use by the masters of antiquity is at any rate merely academic, and we are of the opinion that these ancient prac-

titioners were not conscious of laws and formulas but, like the old wheelwrights, they "felt it in their bones."

To return to our theme: We can again assert with conviction that a neglect of those principles of line, space, and notan, rediscovered by Professor Fenollosa and perfected and made intelligible by Professor A. W. Dow, will always result in loss of power. Regard for such fundamentals will always accelerate our progress if we are engaged in the production of objects into which art enters; and into how few should it not?

Stated briefly and alphabetically, the secondary principles that apply most obviously to all art products are, Balance and Symmetry; Contrast or Opposition, Repetition, Radiation, Subordination, and Transition. One or all or several of these principles may be seen in every work of art, and all together, with the larger trinity of line, space, and notan, they go to build up that quality we call Rhythm.

This quality of rhythm is to be found in greater or lesser degree in every work of art. It is noticeably present in poetry and music. It constitutes the poetry of motion in dancing. It is of such great importance that it will be better to examine it in detail before we speak of the lesser principles enumerated above.

The simplest rhythm of sound is that of a train in motion; its regular monotonous cadence soothes and lulls to sleep. Conversely, the rhythm of a drum stirs to action. Dance music moves children, and many adults, to almost unconscious rhythms of the legs, arms, and body. When reading poetry, though we may sit still in a chair, our spirit seems to move in subtle unison with the cadence of the verse, though it may be the stac-

cato tempo of some forms of vers libre. The veritable poetry of Whitman has a strange rhythm built up of simple repeats. Absence of rhythm results in dissonance, in jerky and unfinished movements; a suggestion of premature finish and sudden restarting—a sense of incompleteness. Through long abuse our eyes have become, in sheer self-defence, insensitive to a lack of rhythm in objects of everyday use, in the arrangement of our homes; in the architecture of our streets. The optical sense gets calloused in the same manner that the auditory nerves of a boiler maker or riveter become, in self-protection, less sensitive to the uproar about them. But we should remember that there are still people who thrill to the appeal of rhythm in a picture as keenly as most people do to music.

Rhythm is, in short, that sense of completed movement, without beginning and without end—a fusion of line and form and colour into one moving entity, that the senses feel in any accomplished work of art. Rhythm leads the eye in a gay and happy manner about a picture, over a statue, along a border, leaving us excited, or soothed, or curious, according to the movement of the particular work of art.

Test this feeling for yourself. Look at a photograph of the Parthenon and then at one of Salisbury Cathedral. Compare your sensations as you examine a picture by Monet and one by Cotman—a Coptic embroidery and a piece of 18th Century French brocade, a Gothic capital and a modern Viennese figure; any of a thousand fine art forms.

Divorced as most of us are from the actual production of works of art, and with our senses debilitated by a decidedly unlovely civilization, we cannot expect instant appreciation. But to apprehend rhythm in art

is to enter into a large and gracious heritage, and one of which we can never be despoiled.

Having sensed something of rhythm, we will go on to examine those secondary qualities that, singly or collectively, go to make up a design, whether it be a simple border or a complex group of sculpture. As before stated they are: Balance and Symmetry; Contrast and Opposition; Repetition; Radiation; Subordination; Transition. We cannot arrange them in order of merit, though of them all probably contrast and opposition are the most vital principles necessary to the "life" of a composition. All these qualities may be exhibited in widely divergent ways in different works of art. They may be plainly stated, or suggested with a subtlety that almost defies analysis.

Repetition. This may take on the simplicity of a woven pattern, from an Indian blanket or a Gothic moulding, or assume the intricacy of the Frieze of the Horsemen from the Parthenon. It is seen plainly in every all-over pattern, as in parquet floors and Moorish tiling—in brocades and wall papers; upon the fine spacing of the repeat depends the quality of the rhythm. Repetition is seen in the rows of columns in a classic temple or the massive piers of a bridge and in the cloisters of a mediæval abbey. In these last examples simple repetition is endowed with a mysterious charm by the modifying effects of perspective.

In painting and sculpture, on the other hand, repetition must never be too obvious. Certain lines echo and repeat as in the various friezes from Delphi and the Parthenon, giving fine, easily sensed, marching rhythms, leading the eye along with the main architectural lines. But in a single picture, or a group in the round, the lines and masses are

built up into a moving whole, so that they echo a definite yet not strident note throughout the composition, much as certain overtones softly weave together the varied chords of a harmonious refrain. The mechanical repeats of a pattern would be entirely out of place in a picture or statue, just as carelessly irregular movement would spoil a simple border or a cretonne. A pattern need not repeat within definite geometrical lines, but if the movement or rhythm is to be fine the masses must be well spaced and the irregularity well under control. Repetition thus imparts a sense of order to a work of art, though this may be obvious, as in a pattern or border, or felt rather than seen, as in fine pictures or sculpture, for Repetition is the foundation of Rhythm. Repetition sometimes merges into transition.

Transition in its simplest form would be seen in the anthemion or honeysuckle ornament. In effect, it is the passing from one movement or shape into another. We see transitions beautifully achieved in Greek sculpture. It shows in architecture, as where the curve of a spandrel conducts the eye from a vertical to a horizontal line; it is seen in the clever adjustments of planes and masses where a polygonal spire is fitted to a square tower. In sculpture and painting, it is seen in both line and plane movements; as from sharp accents to soft tones; from large to small masses, or the reverse.

Radiation is also seen at its simplest in the antefix: obviously in a rose window. It may be from a centre or a point, and every arrangement of drapery on classic and Gothic statuary shows it to a noticeable degree. Usually one chief point of radiation dominates all the others.

In many pictures lines converge upon or radiate from important points in the com-

position, though in a subtle and unexceptionable manner. Radiation may be that of straight lines or curves, and it may be entirely absent from a fine composition. Balance, however, must be present in one form or another, symmetrical or asymmetrical, and consists in a nice adjustment of weight, tone, colour, and plane. In ornament it is more usually a symmetrical arrangement that is used, each side of a centre line being very much the same in line and space and weight. The stele crest shows exact symmetry and a more subtle symmetry is seen in the "Ludovisi Throne." In pictures we may get a balance of almost similar weights, or a balance made up of strong contrasts. Tone and colour enter very largely into balance. A small dark shape against a light ground will balance a much larger mass of dark against middle tone. A bright spot of colour will give equipoise to a neutral patch; a figure will balance a tree or a building. We readily recognize lack of balance when we find in some pictures that the weight or the chief point of interest is placed noticeably to the side, or the top, or appears wedged into a corner, so that there is a lack of stability about it and the eye reverts to a spot outside the normal field of vision and the rhythm seems broken or lost.

Contrast and Opposition are two very important principles. We get many varieties of them in line, space, tone, and colour. Contrast and Opposition are naturally interchangeable terms now and then, but we may have an opposition of similar lines, curved or straight, or find contrast without opposition, as of long and short lines or different areas of the same tone or colour. Together they enter into the other principles. Repetition without contrast becomes merely

tiresome; a balance made up of oppositions is always more stimulating than one of similar masses and tones and colours.

We get simple sharp contrasts in the use, in a rug, of a meander and a zigzag—or in architecture of a half round upon a plinth; decorated with guilloche and fret. More refined contrasts, both of profile and of space, develop in mouldings. In turnery such as is found on 17th Century chairs and tables much use is made of effective oppositions. The diversity of long and short, wide and narrow letters, and of words of different lengths, constitutes the charm of all fine lettering. We find the Italian primitives alive to the various uses of contrast. In landscape, as in architectural backgrounds, upright and horizontal lines are used to steady and bind the composition. In a good chair we get simple and satisfactory oppositions. In Sicilian brocades we get another form of contrast—the counter-change, as in inlay and in floor coverings. The Chinese knew its value when, for instance, they placed a celadon vase of pure contour upon a highly carved base of ebony.

Dignified contrasts run all through the friezes from the Parthenon, not only of line and space, but of texture. In reliefs from the Mausoleum of Halicarnossos aggressive oppositions of line are used to emphasize the clash of warring Amazon and Greek. Without contrast of tones we can have no fine notan. The endless contrasts of tone plus colour will readily suggest themselves. We need specify no more. Absence of contrast at once suggests dullness and monotony, for even the faint gray wash drawings of the Chinese have interesting and different lines and spaces to charm the eye. In short, opposition and contrast are the condiments

of art, they give a savour to ornament and decoration; without them a work appears tame and stale.

Subordination is another principle most clearly seen in architecture. The grouping of less important masses about a central feature, the concentration of effect in the east end of a cathedral (an effect into which transition enters also), the flanking of a main entrance by smaller doorways—these and other examples readily occur. In the works of the Italian primitives this quality of subordination is often splendidly observed. Three or even more incidents may be depicted in one picture and yet the principal feature holds its own in an admirable manner. Other instances of subordination will suggest themselves. A single figure may depend for its effect upon one chief line to which all the others are contributory, and here the principles of radiation and transition may also enter into the general scheme. In Greek sculpture the arrangement of the figures in the temple pediments all show a very adequate treatment of this principle of subordination. It is less easily seen in individual groups and in some, as in the Tyrannicides or the Wrestlers, it is absent—without detracting from the merits of these works. But its omission in such works as the Farnese Bull contributes largely to the confusion and unpleasantness of this inferior work. In conclusion, it will be found that all these principles have their uses and abuses.

We do not suggest that those who wish to appreciate a picture or statue or a fine piece of handicraft should at once look for the principles mentioned above. To do so would be to substitute a somewhat cold and theoretical method of approach, more likely to chill the sensitivity and prevent the emo-

tions from reacting freely to whatever fine yet undefinable quality the work possessed. But we do suggest that those works that are bad or mediocre always fail through lack of attention to these principles. Firstly, through absence of any fine quality of line, space, and notan; secondly, through the neglect of those lesser yet still important principles we have elaborated above.

Another assertion we venture upon is that a thorough understanding of these things is essential to the progress of the average art student, and not inimical to those who are not average. To those who paint or carve "as the bird sings" such things are immaterial; they too, like the antique craftsman, feel it in their bones, as do those fewfortunates who instinctively react to fine art and recoil from the bad—perhaps we should say unfortunates, there being so much of the latter kind of art. But for the great majority of us, shut off from the primitives by four

or five hundred years of, on the whole, steady decadence from the principles of art structure, as applied to painting and sculpture, and separated from our 18th Century ancestors by a wall of mechanical development, an understanding of these fundamentals is an essential factor in appreciation. We have in our experience to retrace the steps by which, consciously or unconsciously, the old masters built up their superb reliefs or frescoes, or produced their stately homes, their beautiful brocades, or their simple, ever-satisfying furniture. We have to make a conscious, analytical, and intellectual examination of laws of which they were perhaps only dimly conscious. By so doing we may span the inartistic gulf that stretches between them and us, so that across this bridge of understanding we may enter into their great legacy and hand on, maybe enlarged and improved, the precious heritage of art appreciation.





Eleventh Century Corbels &

Twelfth Century Chessman.

The most insignificant man can be complete if he works within the limits of his capacities.—GOETHE.

Being simple, they did not go far wrong; they beheld truths which our intelligence hides from us.—ANATOLE FRANCE.

THIS vast field of the minor arts has no perceptible boundaries. In it we discover the works of the fine craftsman, who may be a more remarkable artist than many a painter, and it includes the products of the humblest artisan.

A list of such things alone would make a slender volume, and it would comprise such minutiae as meat skewers and teaspoons, and range up to spinets and Persian rugs.

It amply rewards the most casual explorer, for it is in this region that art makes its most intimate contact with humanity.

We can examine but a few of its products, but a pleasant ramble through it provides the most attractive approach to the fine arts.

Pater somewhere suggests that the shapes of ancient vessels and implements are of such perfection that Nature herself might have produced them had such things grown like fruit. Actually such objects were developed in a manner not dissimilar to the evolution of natural forms. Primitive man shaped and fashioned them with a single eye to their utility, yet in a mysterious way he informed his weapons and utensils with a quality of beauty that is one with Nature. Even his inscrutable urge to decorate did

not interfere with this splendid quality until late in his development, and until the coming of the machine the products of all good craftsmen possessed it in some degree. Each of the things he made so well and featly had the beauty of fitness, the rightness of contour, the balance of line and shape that every hand-made object possesses if it functions perfectly. Even the products of the lowly artisan have the beauty that is never absent from honest work.

This virtue seems to have something pre-adamite about it, and it withers at the first touch of Western civilization. It is, indeed, like innocence, of which the possessor must remain unaware if it is to be preserved. We see the aborigine bartering with cheerful unconcern his most finished household gods for trumpery beads and mirrors. Similarly we may observe the village chair-maker looking with longing eyes at the embossed atrocities of the manufacturer.

Primitive man was happily without such temptations. He shaped and fashioned his flints, tools, weapons, and utensils with such loving care that something of himself passed into them. It was natural that he should give such things names and attribute virtues to them, for he had indeed given them life.

For centuries we see the same spirit prevailing in the crafts of the potter, the smith, the chairmaker, the enameller, the glass-worker, and the weaver. We observe their forms and shapes, generated through no af-

fectionation for art, but developing logically out of their knowledge of their craft. They explored all the possibilities and observed the limitations of their mediums, conducting an intelligent search for a practical solution to meet the necessities of each case, whether it was a window or a grille, a chair to sit in, a sword to grasp, a beaker to drink from, or a helmet to fight in.

The craftsman could draw no veil of mystery or sentiment between his product and his patron. As a workman he contemplated life from a lower altitude than the artist, but what he set out to do he realized with the precision of a master. Being a good craftsman, he worked as rapidly, as economically, and as soundly as might be, never wasting effort or material. But any examination of his products convinces us that he did not look on his work as a dull and routine task, but as something into which he could throw the ardour and the interest, and at times the creative impulse, of an authentic artist.

If we examine a craft like the armourer's, into which in its prime went a tremendous amount of mediæval talent, we find that the period during which serviceability was the first consideration provides the finest examples. There is a perfect balance of æsthetics and technique. The purely curving surfaces of a hauberk or a helmet, that make the ovoid forms of some modern sculpture look tame and vacant, were perfectly designed to deflect blows of sword or mace. In section a helmet will show an economy of material and a saving of weight combined with the utmost strength in the exposed areas and working parts that remind us of Nature's solutions in the shell of a snail or the armour of a lobster.

If we turn to the products of the potter or the glass worker, we see a similar blending

of art and utility. The full-bellied wine jug, the beaker or bottle, the phial or the drug pot, each has its individual shape, its characteristic line, its special use that was never divorced from beauty. It is not until pottery, artificially encouraged, turned to the making of vases for decorative purposes that the decline sets in.

Only the Orientals could succeed in making a vase for beauty's sake. But then the Chinese were decadent enough to admire flower arrangements when the denizens of Europe were still enjoying "the flesh of swine and sickly mead." But what can you expect from people that, as Havelock Ellis points out, used gunpowder for a thousand years without discovering what a splendid medium it was for exterminating each other?

However, so long as men worked with their hands, and with their hearts and heads in their work, we see the same intimate beauty in the crafts, whether in Persia or Japan, in Staffordshire or Massachusetts.

An aristocratic direction seemed almost invariably fatal to it, at least in the Occident. This will be seen if we compare the products of Gobelin in the 18th Century with a Gothic millefleur tapestry, or simple peasant pottery with the products of Sèvres. It is also to be observed how the fine contours of early American silverware surpass those found on the more sophisticated output of contemporary silversmiths in England.

Naturally, the line cannot be drawn with precision, for there were aristocrats with eyes for fine lines and contours, but fashion always seems inimical to the crafts. Nothing can be added or taken away from a fine Queen Anne chair or settee without upsetting its harmony of line. A simple ladder-back or Windsor chair had similar virtues,

and the same may be said of Chippendale's less expensive chairs. So long as he designed chairs for his less wealthy patrons he produced a seat that cannot be improved upon with regard to its sanity, serviceability, and perfect proportions. When he attempted French styles, or let Gothic or Chinese fashions sway him, his sense of design frequently went to pieces.

The chair and cabinet maker was, out of the very function of his craft, saved from the worse evil that beset the weaver, the enameller, and the worker in glass. This was a contagion similar to that which debilitated the painter and the sculptor, or, at any rate, it spread from them to the craftsmen.

The stained-glass worker, so long as he was content to stick to his craft and use patches of pure colour, boldly linked together with the leads, and here and there a little directly painted detail, such as frankly delineated heads, hands, or diapers, so long did he achieve masterpieces of glowing and jewel-like colour and splendid pattern. Directly he apes the painter he sets out upon a course at the end of which he is less than tolerable.

We can trace the same decline in the art of the weaver. The old arras, with its finely decorative figure treatments, declines to the period when the worker was frankly attempting to paint realistic pictures in coloured wools.

Enamels and pottery took much the same course, though by no means all the virtues went out of the crafts, particularly those that offered but little scope for this itch to imitate the painter.

Of course, we do not overlook the happy outcome of man's ineradicable desire to beautify and embellish his works. We wish only to emphasize the close kinship in the crafts of beauty and utility.

The mediæval smith spent many hours hammering and chasing a hinge that already functioned perfectly, doing this for the glory of God and a decent pride in his craft. But regard for its purpose and for the limitations and possibilities of his craft had already provided him with a beautiful and enduring foundation for his added refinements.

This genuine touch of beauty lingered on even into the 19th Century, and we see it in such lowly products as barn-door latches, gridirons, foot-scrapers and even horse-shoes.

It is not until the industrial revolution was in full swing, and the machinist attempted to reduplicate the art of the craftsman, that we reach a period of utterly barbarous taste and hideous inutility.

And so it goes, and continues in great measure. Not until there is a halt in the futile effort to impart a specious handicraft finish or an "arty" note to its products will the machine function naturally and honestly. When manufacturers realize this we shall have, if not beauty, at least dignity and the comeliness that are never divorced from frank and straightforward treatments.

Thus it seems to me a happier and more certain way, to appreciate and understand art structure, if we apply our rules to the common things with their everyday contacts, rather than plunge right into the fine arts.

Unhappily, we shall almost invariably have to confine our applications to things of the past, though there are increasing numbers of objects turned out to-day that stand the test.

In making the examination it will be at times impossible to insist upon strict interpretation of our art-structure vocabulary. To demand that a chair have notan is to lead

to confusion. Fine lines and fine proportions it must possess, beautiful contours and well-spaced parts, and if it has a pierced splat it may show a fine light-and-dark pattern against a light background. A Jacobean cabinet with moulded front may, and usually does, possess a lively and pleasing play of light-and-dark, whilst the ornate carving of a later period frequently does not. But in general we have to employ the terms with flexibility.

Speaking with such slight reservations in mind, we can with little hesitation or fear make our judgments and appraisals. So simple a process is this that we have preferred to linger upon the often neglected thesis of utility in the crafts, and indicate how, when his work was all point and purpose, the craftsman, almost as naturally and instinctively as a trout in a brook, made his way toward his goal, and there found Beauty wedded to Use.

Faced with such eloquent illustrations, it seems almost superfluous to insist upon a criterion or a system of appraisal. Their makers, possessing in some degree that simplicity which is the hallmark of genius, lovingly shaped their works and honestly brought them to perfection. We can see their virtues shining upon them, unobscured by complexities that often prevent a candid judgment of higher forms of art.

Without obtrusive personality, without literary padding, we take them for what they are. If they at times possess only the rugged virtue of sincerity, they cannot fail of a certain quality at least akin to beauty. Many of them, because of the spirit that has passed into them from their creators, make their way into our regard in a fashion that no clever and sophisticated work of art can ever do.

But with all our respect for the antique and warm regard for old things—in fact, because of it—we would protest against the slavish imitation that is so prevalent. Art never flourished that way, and that kind of cult of the antique is a lost cause, though few of its votaries know it. Art cannot be resuscitated once its day has passed, and the post-mortems and embalmings can only preserve old features; and however desirable that may be, it is a living and growing art we want.

It has been calculated, by experts who should know, that if the factory plants in America worked to full capacity they could produce in two working days sufficient to last a week. In other words, the workers might have five days of leisure and still produce all the necessities of life for the nation.

It has been observed also that the tending of machines, to which such a high percentage of humanity is already committed, sterilizes the ability to think independently and, paradoxically, renders a person unable to enjoy in full measure the leisure such machinery production should provide.

It seems that here is an obvious opening for our educators. There can, of course, be no return to the crafts where the necessities of life are concerned. It would be a dubious advantage to substitute some hand-made products for machine-made, even when such things are not indispensable. But craftsmanship might provide for many a healthy occupation for leisure hours. Education is, or should be, deeply concerned with the problem of how best to employ the leisure we all seek, or if we do not seek, is increasingly thrust upon us in so many cases.

A tremendous percentage of mankind is, and always will be, employed in manual labour or mechanized pursuits, and we can-

not all hope to be scenario writers, movie actors, bankers, critics, professors, or artists, and such as love to burn the midnight oil. Even in these categories there are some who might be the happier if they followed the old-fashioned advice of Ruskin, who counselled everyone to do something beautifully with his hands.

This is another of those easy and inexcusable digressions, but it does seem a pity that the creative fire which shines so brightly in the child should be allowed to languish without an effort to fan its dying embers in adolescence.

To-day, and for a century before to-day, that almost extinct species, the fine craftsman, would starve unnoticed, whilst the world is glutted with what can hardly be called a wealth of painting and sculpture.

How many amateurs have had the keen edge of their enthusiasm dulled in plodding wearily through miles of European galleries over-stocked with mediocre paintings and statuary?

How many states could be tented by the square miles of canvas meticulously water-proofed by impetuous daubers and exhibited annually in the salons?

How much misspent energy has been poured into meretricious pictures and all too human statuary, that might in happier channels have been productive of fine chairs, or other lovely and useful things?

What inscrutable mandate is it that decrees a man a connoisseur if he pays a million dollars for a dubious old master, or refuses to rate him as a vegetable if he insists upon buying copies of 15th Century Spanish arcons or early Gothic coffers?

Such perverted topsy-turveydom produces its own reaction and leads cultivated people to appreciate handmade things where such things may be rationally employed.

But until the wealthy are prepared to be as modern in their arts as in their pastimes we can expect a dearth of the things that made a mediæval town a thing of beauty, despite its middens and its gutters.





Harmony is and ever will remain the essence of art, its primary impulse and its ultimate impulse. It means the satisfaction of man's sense of form.—WALDSTEIN.

IN THE short chapters that follow, on Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting, there is of course no attempt at even a brief survey of each subject. They are but essays to apply the principles of art structure in an examination of a few salient features taken from each vast subdivision of art, and by their aid to strengthen our appreciation and enlarge our understanding, and further to stress the weakness inherent in any work that does not conform to the fundamental rules discussed in previous chapters.

It has been suggested that the eye, like any other organ, can be weakened by neglect or calloused by abuse. This is particularly true with regard to architecture, for from our infancy we are accustomed to traverse city avenues and town streets wherein architectural beauty is as rare as golden pavements.

For that reason it is more than ever necessary that we, who would develop our appreciation, keep to simple elemental truths and broad generalizations.

The presence or absence of the simple laws of composition is readily perceived in the common objects of everyday use; in the products of the weaver, the potter, the cabinet maker or the metal worker.

We note instantly whether a cretonne or a floor covering is fine or poor in pattern, and the majority of persons with any claim to a general culture instinctively detect ugliness in a chair, a bureau, or a mirror.

Yet, perhaps because we hurry past or into buildings, or because vast edifices are packed cheek by jowl in modern cities, or for one reason or another, we seldom become acutely interested in an art that is indeed the mother of all other arts and crafts.

The English cathedrals are on the whole less notable than the French, but set as they are amidst an oasis of green, how much more happily they captivate the eye and how much more grateful is the memory of them.

But as to art structure in architecture: It may at first sight savour of simplicity to suggest that incomparable works such as the Taj Mahal, the Parthenon, or Chartres are subject to laws so elementary and so easily grasped. Yet fine spacing and massing is at the foundation of all successful architecture.

The architect deals indeed with ponderable materials; he is compelled to consider ways and means, and work out strains and stresses. He must have a scrupulous regard for the utilities, and compared with the painter he is shackled hand and foot. Nevertheless, his finished product is a line-and-mass arrangement that is as suscepti-

ble to analysis by means of the laws of art structure as any primitive textile or modern painting.

Elie Faure says: "If one has not lived in the intimacy of its ruins, a Greek temple is as rigid as a theorem, but as soon as we really know it our whole humanity trembles in it."

Even the best photograph gives but a simulacrum of the third dimension which is the breath of life to architecture, and after repeated use of illustrations of the Parthenon there is sometimes a furtive suggestion of lip-homage.

And not unnaturally, for such nuances of proportion are not always perceived even by the professional architect, as witness the average church or school, town hall or bank.

The student of art appreciation is somewhat in danger of boredom through the misplaced zeal of instructors who pour out treasures in too rich profusion. The unseeing or over-stimulated eye turns from such embarrassment of choice, or revolts like the healthy child when fed with richly seasoned foods. Shakespeare has often been forced upon the attention of minds not properly prepared to receive his message, with the result that for years his voice never reached the heart.

It would be better to build up the appreciation by the use of examples which provide an easy approach to the masterpieces of distant ages when modes of living and habits of thought were so far removed from ours.

The gabled house of 17th Century New England, the Dutch colonial cottage, the Virginian mansion, all furnish abundant proof of the value of good proportion and good placement in architecture, and may be

closely compared with the "Readybuilt" fungus that springs up overnight in the suburbs of every town.

Modern banks, chambers of commerce, office buildings and lofts are other fruitful sources from which to cull illustrations of vital interest. We might with profit examine a few purely utilitarian buildings with a view to discover the presence or absence of fine line-and-space arrangements and beautiful adjustments of mass to mass, together with the rhythm which comes from such regard for composition.

It is here that we come upon a very significant truth. We notice that those objects that are built with a prime regard for honest service—that combine the utmost efficiency and durability—are those that most nearly approach æsthetic standards.

This is most readily perceived in objects not architectural in the accepted sense: in steamships, locomotives, automobiles, and airplanes. As each becomes more efficient, more powerful, more speedy, they clothe themselves in a purer beauty.

Great bridges, power-stations, dams, factories, and other vast engineering works show this same evolutionary process at work.

Extremes tend to meet, and in but a little space of time we may see the circle complete and witness a surprising fusion between æsthetics and pure science.*

An instance tending to confirm this, which to some may seem a fanciful connection, is the effect already exercised by the Zoning Law of New York. Designed to give the streets and skyscrapers more light and air, it has already profoundly modified for the better the architecture of the city.

*We have stated that art is not science, but that leaves us free to accept the contention of Havelock Ellis that pure science is an art.

Apropos of this blending of art and science, and tending to confirm the mechanical basis of beauty we might instance the discovery of a French savant, who has proven that the dome of St. Peter's, Rome, has a contour precisely that which engineers would have plotted for such a span, although the science of mathematics was not sufficiently advanced, at the time it was designed by Michael Angelo, to have enabled him to use it in his solution of such a problem.

Macody Lund in "Ad Quadratum" says that the rules of Architecture in the Middle Ages were a secret science, as in *Classic Times* to the Greeks "beauty was not an indescribable matter of feelings, but on the contrary, the result of conscious intellectual perception of harmonizing laws existing in Nature itself."

It is in the field of architecture that the Hambidge or other theories may have a definite application and bear healthy fruit, though rules never supply the place of original genius. Nor can such theories contribute much to the spiritual growth and change that is common to all living art. Yet it is conceivable that a system of proportion that may be helpful to the architect would ruin the painter, who in all his works shows an emotional approach and is concerned with fine choices that weaken at the appearances of rules. The architect can never escape the practical question of stresses and strains, of plumbing and lighting, of elevators and heating plant. These things will always impose restraints which to the painter are unknown, and for that reason architecture turns a cold eye upon the various isms that have been joyously exploited by the brotherhood of the brush.

Nevertheless, the architect, more particularly in Germany and Central Europe, is

anxious to try out new materials and investigate the possibilities that lie concealed in such plastic and flexible components as steel girders and wire mesh and concrete. He may not be able yet to take these things and mould them nearer to his heart's desire, but they can be shaped and fashioned in ways quite strange, and receive impressions from which stone and wood recoil.

These things open up alluring vistas, for evolution is still with us, despite denials here and there, and after all, a Doric temple for a Mack Sennett comedy seems a little out of place. However, we need never fear an outbreak of Cubism or Vorticism on Main Street. It would be as fatal to the architect's reason as it would be to his client's bank account.

This is another digression, from which we will return to the subject of utility and beauty.

That ogre in the way of progress, the "practical man," may be moved from beauty's right-of-way by the double appeal of art and barter. He is already awake to the fact that such a commercial aim as window dressing is furthered by attention to good spacing. The more alert are also aware that efficient planning brings fine design into a surface car or a factory, and that distinction in a building is a decided asset in business.

The interested student should look up the Year Books of the Design and Industries Association, published by Ernest Benn, in which many illustrations confirm this alliance of beauty and utility. In good examples we see a simple and satisfying arrangement of line and mass. Stripped of all ornament the factory may still impress by its straightforward placing of doors and windows, bays and piers. The rightness in the arrangement

of these simple rectilinear elements imparts a character lacking in many a more important or more pretentious building. In some, indeed, there is an approach to the austere dignity of a cinquecento palace or the formal beauty of a Doric temple.

Having lingered upon these utilitarian things, though we live in a distressingly utilitarian age, we can revert to more ancient and comely forms, remembering that this circle will not be completed unless we extend both ends.

Even in the examination of antique practices we find a somewhat parallel development. Beauty grows out of knowledge and power.

The heavy Doric gives place to the graceful Ionic. The often clumsy Romanesque is replaced by the upshooting slender Gothic. Only when ornament usurps the place of construction do we see a decadence of style.

Moslem art abounds in examples that are splendid illustrations of the right subordination of ornament to architectural design. Minarets, domes, walls, windows, arches, and ceilings are alike encrusted with exquisite patterns. Worked in colours, in stucco, in faïence, in mosaic and pierced marble, they cover every surface, yet such is the respect for primary forms that richness rarely obtrudes and elaboration seldom lapses into extravagance.

Taken together, these extremes emphasize the fact that ornament is a relative term.

Many a building burgeons out into carved capitals, moulded cornices, sculptured frieze and copious arabesque, only to achieve futility at great expense.

On the other hand, the 18th Century architect of Spain with his brave baroque accomplished at times some splendid feats

of bold and striking massing, feats which his more gymnastic contemporary in Italy never approached.

An understanding of art structure enables us to appreciate both simplicity and richness. We realize that the absence of ugly and useless sculpture, a scarcity of trite and trifling decoration, does not necessarily spell beauty. We know that the piling up of figures in serried ranks, the fine fretting of capitals and mouldings and the intricate piercing of windows, as at Amiens, or the stupendous wealth of pattern as at Granada does not always imply vulgarity or ostentation.

Having now stressed both the utilitarian and the decorative, we shall turn to examine some of the old masterpieces with added zest.

The line illustrations show how the bold massing of a few simple elements is common to a Gothic tower or a city hotel. It is easy to make an experiment in readjustment and demonstrate the facility with which such spacing may be degraded.

As we apply our touchstone of style it will be impossible to escape the conclusion that, consciously or unconsciously, the builders of mediæval castles and cathedrals, Oriental palaces or tombs, of Greek temples or Roman aqueducts, alike respected the unwritten laws of art structure.

Primarily these works are arrangements of line and mass and light-and-dark, and are governed by these same principles that apply to a patterned rug or a painted vase. The placing of their towers and transepts and apses, their domes, bays, and buttresses, columns and cornices, stringcourses and panels, niches, friezes, doors and windows— which things break up the mass and impart a rhythm of line and notan to the whole

façade—the right placing of these units may be soundly tested by the application of the principles elaborated in previous chapters.

To conclude, perfection of line and space is common to all fine architecture, to St. Peter's Dome or the Woolworth, to Wells Cathedral or a half-timbered cottage.

Palace and tenement alike are merely good or bad arrangements of a few simple elements—horizontal, vertical, and oblique and curved lines. Given an appreciation of art structure, such fine organizations might be common to apartment houses and factories, subway kiosks, and even gasoline stations.

Since the foregoing was written there has been held in New York the comprehensive Exposition of Architecture and the Allied Arts, and several visits compel a further reference to the significant creations of the Modern American architect. In civic and domestic buildings alike, he shows a remarkable and progressive development of both technique and art.

In Boston, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Chicago; in the South and Middle West, as in New York, buildings of prodigious height shoot up with a rapidity that would leave the old cathedral builders breathlessly persuaded that this modern construction was a miracle, effected by the intervention of devils or angels. But the master masons of mediæval Strasbourg or Cologne would unhesitatingly admit into their brotherhoods the architects of these sky-piercing towers, for they are "tall" in the full meaning of the original Anglo-

Saxon, which was—admirable, celebrated, exceptionally excellent, great, brave, sturdy, spirited. And to these virtues they add in full measure the harmonizing, unifying quality of beauty.

The pity of it is that too often such masterpieces are wedged in between utilitarian lofts, or set upon such narrow streets that not even a dislocated neck provides a comprehensive view.

In general, our civilization shows but little disposition to hide its light under a bushel, but there is a decided tendency to produce real architectural beauty and sterilize its chief function.

In domestic architecture a sane and comely development parallels the slightly hectic growth of civic buildings.

The French château—the type that bristled with machicolated turrets—and the Swiss chalet have been succeeded by intelligent derivations from English, Spanish, and Dutch sources, thoroughly adapted to modern ideas of comfort, convenience, and sanitation.

And, as we have more than once insisted, such subsidiary virtues are but part of the larger utility that Beauty always holds within her forms, forms that are both ample and compact.

The briefest scrutiny of modern architecture will provide a convincing proof that here we have an art that needs no doctor, nor provides distressing problems for the psychopath or the metaphysical æsthete. Its health and strength are the best augury for the continued progress of the arts of sculpture and painting.

Egyptian



Knife



The best of artists hath no thought to show which the rough stone in its superfluous shell doth not include.—M. ANGELO.

IN OUR approach to the subject of sculpture we must bear in mind some of sculpture's limitations. The sculptor deals with pure form, almost entirely divorced from colour. He is confined to renderings of the human figure and the forms of animals. His technique prohibits the use of the suggestive tones and half-revealed shapes that so often pass for art in painting.

Unless his work is finely conceived and clearly wrought his message is lost, and his output is but an ineradicable offence.

That so many sculptors fail in this high aim and merely succeed in inflicting a perpetual outrage upon the community may be one of the reasons why there is far less interest in sculpture to-day than there was in ancient Athens.

But even at its best there are an austerity, a purity, and an aloofness that repel the amateur whose regard for art is merely sensuous. Sculpture can never have the universal appeal of painting, and those who feel its power may congratulate themselves on being among the elect.

Sculpture, since the High Renaissance, has almost invariably connoted work in marble or bronze, with the human form bulking enormously amidst the output. The male and female figures, with here and there the aristocracy of the animal kingdom, comprise the chief and indeed almost the only resources of the sculptor.

If the layman is inclined to question the

necessity for so many human forms, usually nude, that decorate our buildings and adorn our parks and squares, he must recollect that to the sculptor the human figure represents the acme of plastic beauty. It is a never-failing source of inspiration to an artist intent upon building up a rhythmic harmony of splendidly shaped solids.

If the layman also complains that there is too much nudity, and not a little suggestion of sex about the art of the sculptor to-day, he should also recollect that the Attic chiton can never be treated more satisfactorily than it has been already, in a thousand ways, by the Greeks; that mediæval costume smacks a little of romanticism and affectation when used in the 20th century, and that modern costume, even when quite beautiful, has a fatal habit of "dating" any but the most powerful and uncommon treatments. All these things explain the predilection for the nude.

And as to sex in sculpture, it is no less insistent in painting, in literature, or in life itself. Until humanity reaches a beatitude suggestive of Confucius or St. Francis it probably will be. If the note seems a little strident to-day, the source of such extravagances may be found in the repressions of a previous generation that delighted in leg-of-mutton sleeves, hour-glass corsets, and wedding cake coiffures and hats.

Let the squeamish student live for a while with a sculptured Gibson girl and he will incontinently rush to welcome the wildest products of the moderns.

If such an anomaly as a sexless nude was

desirable the nearest approach would be The Slave, by Hiram Powers. This innocuous and commonplace statue seems entirely in keeping with the unreal and lifeless figures that Hawthorne describes in faultless prose throughout the pages of "Marble Faun."

It is amusing to recollect that The Slave caused an uproar among the prurient of the '40's comparable to the fuss we have had recently over the works of MacMonnies. The same sort of moralists saw nothing but depravity in "Tess of the Durbervilles" and "Madame Bovary." They will always be with us. The healthy-minded can usually tell where sex usurps the place of art, whether it be in literature, in the theatre, or the gallery, and we may be sure that there also is nothing upon which the seeker after appreciation need linger. The work can never be great, for the artist who stresses such peculiarities has already upset the balance which is as essential to art as to nature.

All this by way of helping to remove inhibitions, or merely a *mauvaise honte* that gets in the way and prevents so many from viewing works of art objectively, and which results in a loss of appreciation for an art which rewards her votaries in richer measure than most.

Our predilections are shaped by Fate, and education but polishes the surfaces and suppresses ugly angles. One will prefer landscape and neglect the figure entirely. Another may have a single-minded regard for primitive sculpture, and yet another prefer the calm of Chinese work to the unrest of the moderns.

But it would be a pity, by confining our appreciation to Bodhisattvas, to immunize ourselves to the thrill of the elemental force

of Maillol, or the strange intensities of Lehmbruck.

The student who neglects to study the works of men like Epstein, Bourdelle, Kolbe, Lehmbruck, Bernard, Mestrovic, Gill, Lachaise, Maillol, and a score of other moderns, is neglecting a field more rich and varied, more stimulating and suggestive than any that has been cultivated by the sculptor since the Venus of Willendorf was fashioned.

Even if you should happen to be orthodox, and swear by none but the Græco-Roman gods, you are missing a wonderful opportunity of indulging in one long anathema. But, to the observer, all's well in the world of sculpture. Not even in the art of painting, which is more susceptible to change, and lends itself to dextrous experiment, can there be seen such research, such exploration, such intelligent evolution of ancient types, such a resurgence of the creative impulse that marks every great period. It may be eclectic but it is not second hand.

The art of the sculptor holds no lure for the impressionist, or the facile technician. Every line needs a dozen thoughts, every contour is evoked only by intelligence allied to power.

Despite this discipline, perhaps because of it, the sculptor of the 20th Century, in stone and bronze and wood, with hammer and chisel, is hewing out an imperishable record of his time, more vivid, more alive, and more full of promise than it has been since the days of Pericles or the age of Donatello. It is high time some scholar of insight and imagination epitomized the movement in the volume it deserves.

In applying our criterion of line and mass and light-and-dark to sculpture, certain modifications in the usage, as applied to

painting or even architecture, are necessary. We are dealing with a three-dimensional art, as in architecture. But line takes on a subtlety and intricacy very different from the geometric organizations of the architect.

Nor in painting is there any suggestion of the changeability and movement in all directions which is characteristic of the sculptured forms. The quality of the line may be most easily examined in the contours of a relief, and of course many Egyptian and Assyrian reliefs are little more than silhouettes cut out against a background. But what silhouettes! Their powerful and restrained treatments offer the best introduction to the study of line in sculpture. In bolder reliefs we see lines leaving the edges and traversing the figure to give direction to the planes and lead the eye from one form to another. These masses in turn are organized in such a way that the eye travels over the work and returns to it with the same pleasure with which it contemplates the contour of a fine vase or the drawing in a beautiful profile.

The eye derives very little kindred satisfaction when it is offered a faithful reduplication of the model, for here we get a negation of the creative impulse that seeks to interpret the essence of the form and not merely its superficial beauties. Even when the artist simplifies forms, neglects trivial detail, and models with competence the larger beauty of the figure, he fails to stimulate the deeper feelings that are reached only by an artful or instinctive use of line and mass to build up a composition of solid forms with music in them.

It is this consummation that the modernist sculptor seeks when he uses geometric or abstract shapes and masses instead of orthodox and natural forms. Whether such

abstractions can evoke in any but a few people the same deep emotions that so many feel in the presence of an archaic Athena, the Demeter from Cnidus, Michael Angelo's Dawn, or The Sitting Woman of Maillol, is beside the point. They all succeed or fail according to the competence with which they handle their lines, shapes, and masses.

The quality of *notan* in a piece of sculpture is conditioned by the source of light which casts into shadow or brings out in relief its depressions and projections. This is actually light-and-shade, and in this case fine *notan* results from judicious placement of the masses having regard to the lighting of the work. Whilst the two terms are in this case synonymous, mere attention to studio lighting very rarely brings out the finest qualities of *notan*.

Thus a careful study of the male figure, such as is frequently seen at the average academy exhibition, gives but a naturalistic and commonplace arrangement of light-and-dark. On the other hand, in the well-known Illisus from the west pediment of the Parthenon we see the human figure treated in a manner that is a pure fusion of the naturalistic and the ideal, achieving in an apparently effortless manner a splendid *notan*. On the other hand, fine arrangements of line and mass result in fine light-and-dark in any light. For instance, the frieze of the Parthenon was seen in a glow of reflected light in its original position, yet it remains a masterly achievement in the toplight in which it is now shown in the British Museum.

It is the supreme achievement of the Phidian school that with its respect and worship of the human form it never forgot the primary qualities of good composition. Possibly, as its ideals were not yet corrupted,

it was not even conscious of the need for laws, but retained the instinctive command over such fundamentals that we see in all earlier primitive work.

From the 5th Century Greek sculpture steadily declined, and it is an interesting and instructive study to trace the progressive deterioration of the art, parallel with the development of technique and increasing attention to finish.

In every craft and art we see a similar declension when primary laws are disregarded in a pursuit of externals. We see the noble solidities of the 5th Century giving place to the still godlike grace and charm of Praxiteles. The passion and movement of Scopas, the extraordinary skill of the 4th-Century masters in their treatment of clinging drapery, and the increased attention to the model, lead us down to the agony and violence, the sweat and blood, of the Pergamene school. Bold chisel work is replaced by softer contours of rasp and file, and these in turn give way to polished suavities obtained by the use of antique substitutes for sandpaper or emery.

As the outer skin becomes more lifelike, more anatomically correct, so too the inner core shows a structure that contributes powerfully to its decay. This structure was the *armature* upon which plastic groups were built up. Such is the strength of tradition and the power of false ideals that for hundreds of years sculptors hugged to their bosoms the chief source of their sterility.

The archaic sculptor was a carver. He carved his medium as well, if not as knowledgeably, as the 5th Century worker in marble. His wooden trunk or stone block encompassed his first conception, and like a good craftsman he never wasted energy

on work that did not tell. Good spacing came as naturally to his hand as it did to the Gothic mason or the Chinese worker in slate. He filled his field and told his tale simply, dramatically, and effectively.

But as technique progressed and the living model became more and more the sculptor's ideal, the contrivance called an armature came into use. Upon this skeleton, made up of metal rods and tubes, was built up layer upon layer of clay or wax, until the plastic model was complete and ready for reduplication in marble or bronze.

The later Greeks abused this method, but never to the extent that was common in modern times. The armature was the bane of late Renaissance sculpture and the curse of practically all subsequent work up to the end of the 19th Century.

In neither architecture nor painting did a technical innovation work such havoc, and not until sculptors returned to the direct method of carving do we find again the fine design, the pure contours, and the telling light-and-dark that mark the work of the true artist who respects his medium.

Being able to twist and bend his lines at will, the sculptor, who was by now a modeler, threw away all restraint, and the very facility with which he might compose his group proved his undoing. How far he declined from the compact forms of Michael Angelo, who, we are told, said that a piece of sculpture should suffer little damage if rolled down hill, may be seen by comparing the Lorenzo Tomb with a group by Carpeau.

A more vivid and pathetic contrast may be made if we examine the sprightly soubrettes, poised on one toe, that still infest the academies of Europe and America.

This mania for building up instead of cutting down reached its nadir in the 19th

Century. Corpulent worthies of both sexes were solemnly modelled in the nude and as solemnly invested with clayey raiment, so that to-day they gaze furtively across the public places, manifestly conscious of having been apparently poured into their snugly fitting stomachers or pantaloons. How much better the sanity of Rodin, who clothed his Balzac in a bathrobe.

After a few decades of that sort of thing the pendulum could only swing upward. Bartholomé sensed the futility of such methods when he urged the young French sculptors to go back to the stone of their Gothic forbears, good advice for once followed, and resulting in renewed youth for the art.

As must be expected, the pendulum swings too far here and there, resulting in the heavy and brutal contours of Metzner, or the simplicities that cover vacancy at times in the work of Brancusi, but on the whole the rebound has been astounding and the accomplishment real and enduring.

These things have been dwelt upon at length because the technique of a craft, when properly understood and respected, will always provide a sound foundation for our criticism.

By now it should be obvious to the point of boredom that a careful regard for the model, a faithful rendition of externals, and a lifelike arrangement of limbs can never be productive of fine sculpture.

On the other hand, the Aztec or Hindu carver, hewing his reliefs out of basalt or sandstone, frequently achieves masterpieces of design, though they use widely divergent styles and show but slight knowledge or regard for nature when employing figures.

Similarly Chinese and Gothic works abound in direct treatments that are pure

art. The Chinese sculptor in particular shows a noble serenity of line and a splendid rhythm in the placement of his masses that makes much modern stuff look tortured and nerve-racked. It is this serenity that the Archaic Greek sculptor achieves so naturally; a godlike calm that Phidias retained and the 4th Century lost. It seems to me that this is the supreme requisite of an art which in the very nature of its materials has about it a hint of eternity.

We could spend hours discussing and examining the various types of lines and contours that are characteristic of good sculpture the world over. All are distinguished by a certain gravity and weight, never, even in an Egyptian colossus, suggestive of cumbrous or oppressive bulk.

It is a fascinating study to trace each period and note how the line is expressive of the age that produced it—the violence of Assyria and the sensitive formalization of Egypt, no less than the explosive vitality of the new Austria. We see the strength and subtlety of early Greece give way to libertine indulgence, just as the rough-hewn sincerities of Gothic France are succeeded by the opulent and sensuous forms of the late French renaissance. Italian work is almost always vigorous and lively, but we see there the earlier refinements of Settignano and Mino. da Fiesole swamped under the bravura of Bologna or the inanities of Bernini.

One of the most effective contrasts we could make would be to examine the simple curves, arranged in rhythmic repeats, that impart its calm distinction to Buddhist carving, and then compare them with the characteristic features of modern sculpture.

To-day we note a strong preferment for contrasts and oppositions, although, in

common with all modern art, it is so eclectic and diverse that it is dangerous to generalize. But a noticeable feature is the love of rounded sections set off by angular contours, the employment of long, flattened curves foiled by delicate and intricate patches of profile. At other times there is a clash of line that gives exactly the strident and imperative note so typical of the times we live in.

And after we have enjoyed such stimulating opposites we can turn to the sculpture of the 5th Century B.C. Observe how the note set by the line is taken up sonorously by the rich forms. Contour smelt into planes, mass enters mass and again emerges in echoing forms throughout. A leg growing powerfully from the loins repeats the sweeping rhythm of shoulder and arm. The torso, turning with the ease of a dolphin at play, cajoles the eye along each subtly defined plane. Such profundities of line and mass are also to be seen in Michael Angelo's Adam—and his creator was a sculptor, too—but in sculpture the harmonies of line and mass and light-and-dark are infinitely variable, changing with each changing point of view and shifting with the shifting source of light.

It is this variability that constitutes the chief delight of sculpture, and if it is not apprehended we cannot enter into the fullest enjoyment of the art.

But we have lingered long enough over things that defy a too close analysis. We cannot lay down rules for sculpture with the plausibility that we may for Architecture or even painting, certainly with nothing approaching the conviction with which we may apply them to a rug, a vase or a cretonne. We are reaching a stage now where art structure is but a foundation, upon which

the sensitivity builds in confidence its own interpretation. In the illustrations these laws are used to analyze some of the examples, but whether we apply them synthetically or merely feel their weight and value, we should never again ask for "truth to nature" before respect for æsthetic laws, nor demand technical skill before emotional expression.

If we can appreciate the Ludovisi Throne, a Ming horse, or an Assyrian relief, we cannot conscientiously turn a cold eye upon the products of the moderns.

All we can say in conclusion is that fine line arrangements, fine placing of masses, and finely balanced light-and-dark are as characteristic of good sculpture as they are of good architecture, painting, or handicraft.

The simplest way to apprehend such simple truths is to study the work of the archaic Greeks, with its primitive strength and economy of means, and its direct solutions comparable with Giotto's in painting. Then continue with the metopes and frieze of the Parthenon, the reliefs from Halicarnassos and the Pergamene altar, with finally some examples of Alexandrine and Græco-Roman relief work.

In the round, examine the early Apollos and Goddesses, the figures from Delphi, Ægina, Olympia, and the Parthenon, passing by way of the Winged Victories and the Hermes of Praxiteles to the Mænads and Venuses of the 4th and 3d centuries on to the Dying Gauls and Amazons of Pergamus, to the Laocoön and the Farnese Bull.

The lesson is pretty obvious to any one not blind to the visual appeal, and to any but the hide-bound academician the archaic carver, like the primitive mural painter, stands the most rigid test.

His very inability to carve the figure "true

to nature" prevented him from frittering away his powers on non-essentials. Unable to be clever, he was good. Incapable of carving precisely what he saw, he expressed all the more powerfully what he felt. In common with other primitives, the virtues of his defects informs his work with a spirit far transcending that of more competent artists of the 4th Century.

Not to take up more time in writing, when the visual appeal is the prime essential, we conclude with a reaffirmation that beneath

all the impersonal subtleties of the Greeks, with their sane balance and healthy objectivity, lie the fundamental rules of art structure. And these rules are big enough and flexible enough to measure also the works of the modernists of every school. However introverted, subjective, and personal it may be, or however respectful of tradition, the product of the 20th Century sculptor stands or falls as a work of art by its observation or disregard for the same laws.

THE JEFFERSONIAN MUSEUM





There is a profound rule of art, bidding a man in the midst of all his study of various styles or the pursuit of his own peculiar imaginations, from time to time to steep himself again in Nature.—GILBERT MURRAY.

IN THE whole field of art, painting easily ranks first as the most fascinating and varied division. An art possessing such a range of subject and such a diversity of styles, and which adds to these qualities the powerful appeal of colour, will always hold the premier place in the esteem of mankind. Another factor contributing to this regard is the readiness with which painting responds to change, making it the favourite experimental medium of the intelligent artist, and a constant source of interest to the critic and the amateur.

At this point, remembering the many able and adequate treatments this field receives, it might be more discreet to rest content with a simple explanation of art-structure principles as applied to pictures, without entering upon a discussion, which inevitably becomes controversial.

But the subject not only invites but demands debate.

We are approaching a stage where rules become less capable of exact definition, and where the personal equation enters more and more intimately into any estimate that is made. We shall encounter work apparently so divorced from tradition that even an understanding of art structure is often insufficient to overcome deep-rooted

antipathies, which have their origins in things but remotely connected with æsthetics. These barriers to full appreciation must be removed before we can enjoy to the full the stimulating and provocative products of the moderns.

Art has just passed through a period of labour and rebirth, the turmoil of which makes any unbiassed estimate a matter of extreme nicety, and unless we have some idea of the causes underlying this renaissance we are likely to turn from many works that, once comprehended, enrich our experience and provide a constant source of pleasure.

Schopenhauer, following the advice of the Tea Master, Kabori-Enshiu, counselled us to wait until a work of art spoke to us first. If it never speaks we might recall Charles Lamb's tolerant admission that he could never hate a man if he knew him.

Jan Gordon, in "Modern French Painting," gives an illuminating account of how he became aware of the beauty of a Cézanne. If such an expert æsthetician could remain so long unconscious in the presence of genius, we should at least beware of hasty condemnation.

Approached in that spirit, modern painting offers an unparalleled opportunity for discussion, entertainment, and even dissension. Ranging from the frank primitive to the genuine expressionist it gives to all the widest choice. No one with a respect for truth and beauty can pretend to love it

all, but everyone may make a rich and varied selection.

A summary like this can touch but a few of the more salient features, and the comments made are personal opinions that should be weighed in the light of more extended reading. The one point upon which we can be emphatic is that a regard for the flexible rules of art structure should always come before a respect for conventional treatments, or a demand for traditional beauty, when you examine any painting.

Before we apply such rules it seems advisable to inquire just what qualities we demand of a painting, and to attempt to settle the vexed question of what is permissible or advisable in subject and interpretation.

Omitting Græco-Roman work, of which few examples survive, the technique of the painter has undergone a steady development since the early Florentines reintroduced fresco painting. Their work, done directly and surely upon wet plaster, dealt at first with simple two-dimensional design. Such flat treatment is still in vogue, and its practice has been much enriched and strengthened by the stimulus derived from China and Japan. It is not difficult for the amateur with an understanding of art structure to appreciate such work, and we have already discussed the fundamental principles that underlie any successful decoration.

Oil painting, first exploited by the Flemish artists, and soon taken up by the Florentines, ushered in an era of easel pictures, painted upon wood or canvas. Some purists see the decline of painting from this period. At first the same precision and delicacy, the same regard for fine contours and pattern that characterized the best fresco painting

pervaded work in oil. Gradually a pre-occupation with the problems of perspective and anatomy changed the technique.

Tactile values were considered all-important, and insensibly representation became the ideal. Paintings were executed in monochrome and glazed with colours, and we see light-and-shade usurping the place of light-and-dark.

Despite the glories of Venetian colourists, this decline was noticeable by the 16th Century and prevailed until the beginning of the 19th. During this century artists experimented with the direct application of pure pigments. In water colour, with transparent washes, and in oil with minutely separated touches, the artist sought to build up vibrant colour harmonies. Sunlight and the open air gave the atmosphere previously sought in the studio. In the hands of the Impressionists painting lost the solid qualities it had hitherto retained, though their work marks an immense advance in colour realization. Later artists sought to restore plastic values without surrendering this advantage. It is in the field of colour that the modern artist has made his most extensive conquests and it deserves a book to itself. And in such a tribute honour would be paid to the modern chemist, who has provided colours of such intensity and richness that they must be the envy and despair of the old masters' shades.

Not to put too fine a point upon a definition, the modern artist seeks a command of all these qualities; of fine design, of three-dimensional form, of depth as well as breadth, and the utmost intensity of colour and expression.

Naturally this orchestration of many instruments is a difficult and often unattained ideal. But in the perfect picture, yet

to be painted, the eyes will be rejoiced with the line of the Early Greeks, the pattern of the primitive, the solidity of Michael Angelo, the colours of Venice and Persia plus the ardour, the animation, and the intrepidity of the moderns. Rhythms of line and plane and tone and colour will march or dance across its surface and send their echoes down its remotest distances.

So much, so briefly, for technique and aim; and now to examine as summarily certain categories, and attempt some definition of certain controversial methods of expression and questionable choices of subject.

The manner and content are the things that most bother the amateur attempting to appreciate modern art. Custom has habituated him to those works that were revolutionary at the time of their production, so that many who will concede the preëminence of Giorgione and Titian, of Velasquez, Goya, El Greco, of Daumier, Courbet, Manet, Degas and Renoir, yet fail to make the connection between these masters and those now living. And for this hesitancy there is much excuse, for the modern artist, like the modern city to nerves habituated to rural calm, is a little trying to eyes accustomed to the continence and serenity of the old masters. Even to a dispassionate survey it does appear that, as we grow more restrained in speech, more accustomed to soap, more competent with forks, and less given to guzzling wine than our forbears of Restoration days, there creeps into our arts a savour that is redolent of Restoration drama. It is that which brings us squarely up against the question of what is or is not to be counted justifiable in art. It is a query that must be answered for the amateur before he can make contact with much fine work of the 20th Century.

Says Santayana, "It is mere barbarism to feel that a thing is æsthetically good, but morally evil, or morally good but hateful to the perception. . . . The giving of praise or blame or precept, this is not a matter of science but of character, enthusiasm, niceness of perception and fineness of emotion."

The modernist creed is that anything that is art is right. The modern artist believes that art soars above morality; with him, as with Plato, the good and the beautiful are synonymous.

The amateur is apt to mix his ethics and æsthetics, forgetting that conventional morality is always at loggerheads with art.

If we can make a liaison between the two it will help decidedly toward appreciation.

We are not interested in the artist with an attitude of "L'art c'est moi," nor in the embattled and forbidding Dorcas; neither is of service to us. The question we seek to solve is whether there can be drawn a line between the æsthetically imperative and the morally indefensible.

For the artist the answer will be No; for the teacher it must be Yes. To that hybrid who is something of both, the line will be drawn in diverse places at various stages of development, leaving at maturity no bounds between art and life.

Let us beware of forcing adult art upon immature minds, whether such are possessed by infants or octogenarians, and recollect that, even since Milton, man at times "perverts best things to worst abuse, and to their meanest use."

If we draw an analogy from literature we shall more readily understand some of the impulses motivating many artists to-day. The much-discussed Ulysses of Joyce

has been defined by some critics as an emotional explosion engendered by a too papistical upbringing. Similarly the extravagances of some modern artists may be but the sublimation of repressions generated by academic training, or too much copying in art galleries and schools.

Such suppressions and repercussions are common in our complex civilization. As life becomes more bureaucratically regulated, and we are surrounded by prohibitions, ordinances, and enforcements, we can expect an increasing number of such unrestrained gestures in art.

But if artists of both sexes, with pen or brush, produce violent or even nauseous works, we have to remember that their art is but a product of the times; and for these times each little homunculus is in some degree responsible.

G.B.S., an apostle of freedom, would call such extravagances "documents" to be preserved but not broadcast, and with such an attitude few but perverted moralists will cavil.

To-day hardly a critic could be found to condone Ruskin's deliberate destruction of certain unprintable drawings by Turner, but in the matter of artistic license we must beware of developing minds so broad that the sides fall out.

Whether he likes it or not, the teacher, at any rate, must take a stand somewhere. It is safe, then, to say that an artist who displays a penchant for painting in questionable haunts, as does Roualt, can hardly be considered a shining example for the young art student.

It is not very profound to say that we get out of a work of art what we bring to it, or that we see what we look for. Such a doctrine in its essence absolves the artist

from all effort. Yet a work may have power and freedom, fine colour, tactile values, and an emotional content far transcending that of a Byzantine Madonna, without the power being beneficent or the emotion creditable. Even those who refuse to draw lines should remember that in art, as in other things, "what is loathsome to the young savours well to thee and me."

The connoisseur is blind to subject but alive to interpretations, the undeveloped critic will always demand recognizable and respectable themes.

At a recent "Independents" show the most disgusting picture was not for me the cerise and bloated nude, which, however lacking in refinement, showed at last a courageous disregard of conventions, but a fully clothed cerulean-eyed and saffron-haired lady seated in a Louis Seize chair. There, it seemed, was epitomized the cheap vulgarity of Main Street; its flickering signs and soda fountains, its shrieking posters and gum-chewing cinema addicts; the whole strident appeal to the universal stomach and the rudimentary sense organs.

Love of beauty alone can irrigate such arid spots, and art too long has been the prerogative of the aristocracy, whether of culture or riches. Until the man in the street demands a little of it in his daily life we shall have to make the best of merely utilitarian cities. For it is unfortunate, but true, to observe that in democracies the ultimate consumer will have as much to say about standards as the man of trained intelligence.

However, regarding the line, it will be drawn just where our understanding places it, and until we grow up æsthetically we are likely to let subject obtrude, and remain untouched by interpretations.

Now for other categories into which the disturbing question of morals does not enter. In these divisions will be found not only figure compositions, but still-life work, landscapes, and abstract treatments.

Perhaps the most provoking and plausible of these groups are those who claim intellectual qualities for their works, or at least do not contradict such assertions upon the part of others. Usually, by means of specious forewords and explanations, they attempt to stimulate emotions that their works could never reach. This practice is every bit as perverted as that of the literal-minded copyist who tacks a fragment of verse upon his picture frame.

Many of these pictures are the result of the conceit held in many quarters that a picture should have other functions than a release of the emotions. Obsessed by such ideas these practitioners demand that a picture present an intellectual problem, the more insoluble the better. Like many other corruptions, it has at its roots a sound idea, and is in part a natural reaction from the obvious and anecdotal treatments of the academician.

Our literature responds similarly and infinitely more intelligibly to this demand for more effort on the part of the reader. But each art, if it is to remain pure, must function within its own orbit.

Such exquisite cameos as those, for instance, in Katherine Mansfield's "Bliss" can have no counterpart in an art concerned primarily with the visual appeal of lines and shapes, tones and colours.

Art may deal with anecdote, with history, or with every-day life, as in Assyrian reliefs or Florentine frescoes, without loss of structure, but to introduce so-called intellectual sidelines is to weaken its

integrity. We might as reasonably expect the sensuous art of the musician to concern itself with problems in trigonometry. The diapason may thrill the soul and help a man resolve some tangled doubts, but the person who regards an art gallery as a place for intellectual exercises is in danger of mistaking a movie house for an educational institution.

It is possible that Van Gogh had been a more powerful painter had he possessed the intellect of Leonardo. But he was endowed with the emotional qualities that are the prerequisites of the authentic artist.

On the other hand, many a clever cubist intellectually concerned with the intricate movements of planes, falls æsthetically and emotionally flat without telling us very much about the curvature of light or the interpenetration of solids.

Intriguing patterns, jolly colour, interesting and instructive experiments, we must grant such things their place and justification. But when green herrings on a brown plate are heralded as intellectual deep-sea fruit, we grow fatigued. To claim such things as intellectual is to fall into the common error of confusing the meaning of words.

Let us, then, have done with the twaddle that attributes apocalyptic powers to incomprehensible areas of paint.

But before we grow polemical, let us consider the many works, the products of men indubitably artists, which yet remain beyond the comprehension of the intelligent amateur. Into this class fall the colour schemes of Kandinski, devoid of any representational element, and the arrangements and abstraction of Severini or Picasso or Bracque. The only thing to do is to accept them as patterns or colour schemes,

or experiments in plane movements, without distressing ourselves about their meaning, or we may indulge ourselves in personal interpretations. They are not, in any case, works of the highest merit, and their incomprehensibility piques our curiosity rather than secures our regard.

These experimentalists are too astute to continue exploring blind alleys. They push on into other paths.

Not so the members of another group, who are primarily introverts, and wholly concerned with subjective works. These artists are in a constant state of exhaustion, for by divorcing themselves from reality they are forced to feed upon a limited supply of what might be termed, by the flippant, interior decoration.

This group fades gradually into the crepuscule where a few lone hands practise an esoteric ritual. It is in this twilight that we now and again stumble against the works of those often intelligent and sensitive souls who, under more fortunate stars, might have produced works comparable with the flowers and fantasies of Odilon Redon.

Then there are others in whom a delusion of grandeur has usurped the place of reason, and lastly those to-be-envied wights who have sublimated their frustrations by creating a little world of their own into which they retreat, fondly deluded that they alone have found the key of the door the others howl without.

Again it seems likely that such manifestations will be increasingly frequent in an urbanized and restless civilization, out of touch with Nature. The presence of a Breughel or a Bosch in mediæval art does not invalidate the assertion that such things were unknown when men lived less mechanized and more leisurely lives. Was it

because, deplorably ignorant of Press Agents and Studio receptions, they could concentrate upon their art?

Looking down history, we find authentic artists who were primitives, paupers, or peasants; who were men of culture and affairs; some on the borderland between genius and madness. Group shades into group, qualities overlap, and virtues taper down into defects. Drawing lines of demarcation is a matter of extreme nicety, and of no great value when achieved. Our great objective is to be able to apprehend beauty, undisturbed by pedagogic classification. And when we apprehend it in the work of any artist we are released from all perplexity with subject or interpretation. In the words of Havelock Ellis, we feel that they have "gone to the depths of their own souls and thence brought to the surface and expressed—audaciously or beautifully, pun- gently or poignantly—intimate impulses and emotion which, shocking as they may have seemed at the time, are now seen to be those of an innumerable company of their fellow men and women."

And now to make contact again with art structure, which has been neglected during our discursive examination of cults and tendencies. In each instance the product of an artist, of whatever category, may be tested by its aid. Each one stands or falls as he has regard for fine choices of lines and shapes, notan and colour.

Any critic worth his salt could interpret gracefully the most incoherent canvas, and some of the critics do it in excellent style. The great merit of our system of synthetic appraisal is that it arms us against the hypnotic spell of words which have been lavished in such profusion to cover the vacancies of pseudo-art.

Before applying the rules of art structure to controversial or obscure works, it might be well to test them in connection with paintings that offer no problems to the understanding.

In the well-known *Doctor* by Luke Fildes, instanced by Clive Bell in "Art" we see a painter concerning himself solely with subject matter. This picture, for the cognoscenti, possesses absolutely no æsthetic content, yet it succeeds in making many a novice feel, at least temporarily, disposed to humanitarianism and almsgiving, simply by what it suggests.

It will be obvious to all who have followed us so far that here we have literal interpretation quite divorced from genuine artistic feeling. The emotions it stirs could be evoked by a tableau, or even a poor photograph, and many a snapshot with a kodak possesses qualities of line and notan of which it is entirely innocent. It is the work of a moralist working in the wrong medium.

To realize the tremendous gap that can exist between the work of a supreme artist and that of a futile painter one should compare the *Christ on the Mount* by Debat Ponsans with M. Angelo's *God*. The first, utterly lacking in any sort of feeling, if we except a cheap theatricality, puerile in construction and mawkish in sentiment, was nevertheless one of the most "popular" pictures of the year 1900. In Michael Angelo's *God*, swinging in awful majesty across the Sistine Vault, we have a noble fusion of technical skill and emotional power that fills the gaze with wonder and with awe.

It is the superb artist functioning with the ease and precision of a bird in flight. As a work of art it stands every test of art structure, and it moves us without any

suggestion of sentimentality or pathos. In between these extremes are thousands of works, both great and small, upon which we can use our touchstone of appreciation.

It is in this disregard for the finer points of composition that the products of the academies disclose their weaknesses, and we touch upon this matter because even to-day, after twenty years of swift development, the academicians are still the only authentic artists for many otherwise educated people. Many of them have only changed their costumes since the Victorian era, and their institutions do little more than keep tradition just alive. Their output shows an undeniable skill and proficiency in the technique of their art, an accomplishment not lightly to be despised. Nevertheless, technique is but a tool in the hands of the genuine artist, who never thinks of sacrificing his soul for its attainment.

The academic painter believes that skill should come first, and that then all things shall be added unto him.

Even such a brilliant artist as Sargent surrendered some finer qualities in its acquisition; on the other hand, we shall beware of the fumbling and botching that speaks of immaturity whatever its content.

However, the modernist quarrels not so much with the technique of the academies as with their methods of approach. Learning to draw and paint is too seldom accompanied by parallel lessons in thinking and feeling; the stimulus is too great a measure comes from without, and precepts and formulas are invoked instead of intelligent and courageous experiment. The modern artist insists that a blind respect for tradition stifles the inquisitive and questing spirit that all art students possess at first, and, enthusiastically seizing upon a some-

what tenuous analogy, claims that the art of medicine would be still bleeding and cupping its patients had it as little regard for progress as the pedants of the schools.

Without truckling to the impatient modernists who brush aside all training as an unnecessary discipline, we can affirm without hesitation that the academies have never solved the great question of how to subordinate technical proficiency to emotional expression.

The more we examine the works of artists, great and small, the more convinced we become of the need for an understanding of the basic principles of composition; instinctively and spontaneously if possible, but acquired somehow they must be.

As our knowledge and understanding develop and our appreciation deepens, we insist, more and more unconsciously, but more and more firmly, upon such fundamentals, and whenever a choice has to be made the art lover turns always to the master of moving lines and shapes.

If in these last chapters there is less insistence upon a strict application of rules or laws, and there are more digressions upon tendencies and styles, it is because we realize that laws must never be rigid.

At the outset it was stated that the chapters were progressive, and at this time we would not risk a tiresome repetition of criteria which, if we have said anything to the point at all, are now felt to be the vertebræ of any organization claiming to be a work of art. The backbone is flexible and subject to evolutionary processes, but it must be there.

We approach a stage in our development where the need for such a structure will be instinctively realized rather than consciously paraded, and we shall be ready to make

choices and decisions unaided and unperturbed. In making them we should recollect that the subjectivity that is so characteristic of modern art, and which, if we are modern, moves us in diverse ways, may be as distasteful, or at least as little valued to-morrow as is to-day the artificiality of the 18th or the religiosity of the 17th centuries.

Time changes our ideals, and we think the same to-day as we thought yesterday only if we have ceased to think. We stress only those elements of beauty which we recognize unchanging down the ages.

The primitive, working amidst feuds and sieges, pestilences and sudden death, painted pictures that invited the soul in contemplation of the beatitudes.

The modern artist, doubting the delivery of milk and morning paper as little as he questions the going down of the sun, in turn demands a vicarious excitement of his art.

If at times his work lacerates the feelings instead of stirring the emotions, it is perhaps because, like the primitive before objective things, he seeks interpretations for subjective moods beyond the present scope of his technique. Looking down the ranges of time, the modern artist seems a restless and unique chameleon; a "sport" in an otherwise stable genealogy. Never possessing the simple faith of the primitives, sophisticated from the days of his youth, he can only attain the artlessness of genius by way of steep and rugged paths.

Some drop by the way, some end at an impasse, but some who have gained the heights think they see before them boundless territories only to be exploited by those who come after.

Whether this be so is a matter for to-

morrow to decide. What we may be sure of is that despite the cult of the pseudo-primitive and the neo-archaic, the conscious affectation of simplicity, and, worse than all, the specious insincerities of paid agents, there grows up among us a steadily increasing number of authentic artists.

And, because art is alive again, there is also an increasing number of understanding amateurs, to whom, indeed, these chapters are devoted.

If the reader, having come so far, will pardon one more simile, we hope to leave

him striding upon the uplands of Art, able to enjoy the pleasant valleys without condescension, and wise enough to appreciate the lofty range of peaks that now stretch out before him into the remote Antique. When he selects and classifies for closer contemplation, he will do it with some confidence, for he now recognizes the abiding qualities that are characteristic of all periods. He will see them shining through the works of the old masters and find them irradiating all those of to-day which Time will not sweep into the caverns of oblivion.



Police Baton 1838 with Greek and Etruscan Helmets.



Concepts and Reactions

The Metaphysician.

. . . He will see a beauty eternal, not growing or decaying, not waxing or waning: nor will it be fair here or foul there, nor depending on time or circumstance or place, as if fair to some and foul to others: nor shall beauty appear to him in the likeness of a face or a hand, nor embodied in any sort of form whatever, whether of heaven or earth; but beauty absolute, separate, simple and everlasting; which, lending of its virtue to all beautiful things that we see born to decay, itself suffers neither increase or diminution, nor any other change.—PLATO.

The Mystic.

This is the spirit that beauty must ever induce; wonderment and a delicious trouble, longing and love, and a trembling that is also delight. For the unseen all this may be felt as for the seen and this souls feel for it, every soul in some degree, but those the more deeply who are the more apt to this higher love—just as all take delight in the beauty of the body, but all are not stung as sharply, and those only that feel the keener wound are known as lovers.—PLOTINUS (quoted by Havelock Ellis).

The Poet.

Because Infinity upon thee broods;
And thou art full of whispers and of shadows
Thou meanest what the sea has striven to say.
So long, and yearnèd up the cliffs to tell;
Thou art what all the winds have uttered not,
What the still night suggesteth to the heart.
Thy voice is like to music heard ere birth,
Some spirit lute touched on a spirit sea.
—STEPHEN PHILLIPS.

The Sensuous Soul.

But that which did please me beyond anything in the whole world was the wind music when the angel came down, which is so sweet that it ravished me quite, and indeed in a word, did wrap up my soul so that it made me really sick, just as I have formerly been when in love with my wife, that neither then, nor all the evening going home, and at home I was able to think of anything, but remained all night transported.—PEPYS' "Diary."

The Aesthete.

Let no one imagine, because he has made merry in the warm tilth and quaint nooks of romance, that he can even guess

at the austere and thrilling raptures of those who have climbed the cold, white peaks of art.—CLIVE BELL, "Art."

The Common Man.

Every man feels for himself, and knows how he is affected by the particular qualities in the (object) he admires, the impressions of, which are too minute and delicate to be substantiated in language.—BOSWELL, "Life of Johnson."

It is highly probable that by this time the reader questions and dissects our theories, and even decides to disagree with some parts of them. Indeed, this book will have missed much of its purpose, if, having read thus far, he or she does not desire to seek other and, possibly, more competent guides, to explore fresh paths and, exercising a choice amongst the thousand other splendid examples that might have been substituted for the given illustrations, set up an independent theory of their own.

Quoting is a not wholly admirable art, but at its worst it at least convicts a writer of a realization that many things have already been better said. The only excuse for the following *mélange* is that each one has a certain pertinence and all bear upon the debatable question, what is Art?

The quotations at the head of the chapter were selected, not with any idea of defining the undefinable, but rather with a view to emphasizing, in a diverse field, the widely differing concepts and emotional reactions existing with regard to that protean and many-faceted quality that we loosely term beauty. Diverse though they may be, and little concerned with the plastic arts, yet there seems to be a bright if tenuous thread that binds them together. Each expresses

a worship and appreciation of that shape of beauty to which each writer was intellectually or emotionally attuned; each "leaves it vague as airy space."

It would indeed be a rash and fatuous guide that would suggest just what feelings an art lover should experience in front of the Ludovisi Throne or the Taj Mahal, but every critic would, I believe, agree that the emotion should partake of the spirit of the quotations selected.

In any appreciation the emotional or the intellectual content will obviously vary in different individuals, and whilst reading will help us to understand much, it is the visual appeal that is the prime factor in any study of the plastic arts. Technical analysis and intellectual speculation may easily be carried too far, just as emotional response may be cultivated until it wells forth like easy tears. The ecstasy and joy that the art lover experiences arises from no cold and arid source, nor is it generated by a spontaneous and volatile enthusiasm.

Our own belief has now been unfolded. It inclines toward, without identifying itself with, that of the purist. Our confession of faith is, we hope, that of the artist.

It has already been suggested that to the artist such ecstasy and joy grows out of an appreciation of moving lines and tones and colours. It is, he avers, an emotion that owes nothing, to sentimental association or suggestion.

The purist stigmatizes as false any feeling, however deep, which is promoted by the subject matter and not by the æsthetic content of the work. Now this is a true creed, but, like others, it can be carried too far by its devotees, until art becomes a lifeless and hieratic ritual, only to be enjoyed by eviscerated æsthetes.

"The artist," says Santayana, "is a dreamer consenting to dream of the actual world" . . . and . . . "Art has its casuistry no less than morals." "To gloat on rhythms and declarations, to live lost in imaginary passions and histrionic woes is an unmanly life cut off from practical dominion and from rational happiness." . . . "Beauty which should have been an inevitable smile on the face of society, an overflow of genuine happiness and power, has to be imported, stimulated artificially; so that art becomes a sickly ornament for an ugly existence."

The ideal beauty we seek will always harmonize with our own personality, and, happily, develop with it. But giving all due weight and respect to the theories of the expert and the dicta of the critics, the amateur should not be unduly swayed and never intimidated by them.

Thousands of music lovers confound the critics by enjoying good music without having the least conception of the art. It is, of course, a rudimentary or truncated enjoyment, but such purely sensuous and unintellectual pleasure not only stills the savage breast, but oftentimes it has stirred poets to lyrical expression.

Indeed, recollecting the shockingly neo-classic taste of his age, we have a suspicion that the urn which prompted Keats's lovely ode would hardly pass muster with one who demanded significant form or splendid design. Even to the catholic artist it was probably but "some pretty surfaces and angles, tricking his soul." But it served. It was a fuse to fire pent-up emotion; it offered a tangent from which his quick imagination ricocheted into fabled and faery realms.

If the surface was pseudo-classic instead

of genuine 5th Century B.C., we can only be thankful that his Muse did not demand perfection of style in the art that inspired it.

Hyper-æsthetically Wordsworth is a dud when he sings: "To me the meanest flower that blows can give thoughts that do often lie too deep for words," and certain lines of his make one suspect that he was not immune from the appeal of contemporary prints depicting homely virtues and concerned with moral precepts.

Such conjectures should prevent the æsthete, and the rest of us, from becoming top-lofty over art; and it should encourage the amateur who may at times feel emotion welling within, excited by trivial and æsthetically negligible objects.

All this has been said, not with any intention of going back upon our own theories, but with a view to self-preserving a sense of proportion.

The merely sensuous pleasure that the average sensual soul feels before a Titian or a Velasquez, a Rubens or an Ingres, is after all a robust and healthy, if immature, taste, capable with the best of developing into an appreciation of Sung pottery, Korin screens, archaic sculpture, and Italian primitives. It is also capable of being over-developed into a love of the exotic and the decadent, the strange and the perverse in art. Such an over-refinement of the sensitivity is obviously detrimental to its possessor, who soon mistakes backwaters for the main current of life. He is eventually afraid to plunge again into the main stream, because here and there floats an uncouth shape or a vulgar colour scheme.

In this strong current of life mingle many arts, each in some degree soluble when taken in conjunction with its affinity. As art embraces architecture, which interlinks

with the pure art of mathematics, so the plastic arts stimulate emotions that cannot always be differentiated from those liberated by other agencies, for

"Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle."

It needs a temerarious spirit to define the currents and eddies of this stream, for into it pours all that is elemental and moving, profound and powerful in Art.

After all this book is written for the art lover and student; the critic and artist can swim where they please.

We have stated, and restated, our theories, humanly convinced that all others tending to support them are right. We await in tranquillity the contradiction and opposition that can only be productive of other and, maybe, more illuminating creeds.

Who has yet found ten cultured people whose tastes agree upon all points, or even, upon a majority of the occasions where the minutiae of art are concerned, "Ten who in ears and eyes match me, we all surmise, they this thing and I that."

But—and it is one of those big Buts—all ten are agreed that Phidian marbles transcend Alexandrine, that the primitive was a better man than the painter of the High Renaissance, that Sung and T'ang pottery is finer stuff than Famille Vert or Rose, 13th Century Gothic sculpture more satisfying than 15th Century, that Sheraton, on the whole, is a more comely style than Louis Seize.

If we have got as far as that we may wander at large without guides, fearlessly basing our further choices upon such solid precepts.

In those more intimate and personal choices each may here and there confess without shame, in the words of George Eliot, that: "There is no better reason for preferring this . . . than that it stirs an early memory, that it is no novelty in my life, speaking to me merely through my present sensitivity to form and colour, but the long companion of existence, that wove itself into my joys when joys were vivid." But we should recollect that it is not Art.

To cut loose from all such associations is to jeopardize the soul and make existence a bore.

Each one who has cultivated an appreciation of beauty knows well that the path becomes more arduous as it ascends.

Burke, in his essay on the Sublime and the Beautiful, voices a universal cry when he says: "In the morning of our days, when the senses are unworn and tender, when the whole man is awake in every part, and the gloss of novelty upon all the objects that surround us, how lively at that time are our sensations, but how false and inaccurate are the judgments we form of things. . . . I despair of ever receiving the same degree of pleasure from the most excellent performance of genius which I felt at that age from pieces which my present judgment regards as trifling and contemptible."

He adds very pertinently: "It is known that the taste (whatever it is) is improved exactly as we improve our judgment, by extending our knowledge, by a steady attention to our object, and by frequent exercise. They who have not taken these methods, if their taste decides quickly, it is always uncertainly; and their quickness is owing to their presumption and rashness, and not to any hidden irradiation that in a

moment dispels all darkness from their minds."

That quotation might more fittingly adorn the end rather than the forepart of this chapter, but we have said nothing yet about the quest of other theories, and the forward-looking student will want to know a little about that field of art criticism which he has been urged to explore.

Here, then, must be made a candid confession. I have not read all the books on art published to date, and sometimes a conviction arises that I never will. After all, any art can be talked to death, and anybody may read himself into a state of insensibility.

It smacks perhaps of hardihood in one who has scribbled thus far—and refuses even yet to stop—to suggest that what we need to-day is less talk about art and more work at it; fewer exhumations and autopsies and more creative urges. Incidentally we could do with fewer Antique dealers and millionaire "Collectors"—and some modern substitutes for Burgundian kings, Medicis, and popes.

But to return to the layman in search of a theory. It is more easy to sympathize with his dilemma than to suggest a way out. The briefest examination discloses a vast ocean of good works, a flood of art books that is daily swollen by a deluge of new publications. The art student can only approach in trepidation and hope, for it needs an omnivorous and tireless reader, wise as Solon and patient as Job, to distil the truth into manageable draughts.

Think of it; from Reynolds to Ruskin, Pater and Santayana, Fenollosa, Dow, Ross, Bell, Gordon, Pach, Fry, and scores more good men, not to mention the numerous band of very competent writers upon

the great dailies and periodicals, or even suggest the Bodes, Brandes, Berençons, Maeterlincks, Croces. How it all cries aloud for a brilliant summary, a classic anthology, or even a cold epitome of the more discordant beliefs. And whilst this consummation awaits, things approach a crisis. No art student, precious few art teachers, and no amateur with other major interests can ever hope to get through more than a fraction of the reading with which they are confronted.

How happy were the old masters before Vassari! But dying since, this one in poverty, that one gracefully, mostly without sound of drum or fife, they now lie buried beneath a very Cheops of critical appreciations, biographies, and monographs.

Worse follows. Nineteenth Century academicians or their relatives rake us from three-decker reminiscences and memoirs, and we reach a stage of collapse and surrender when the little masters of the 20th Century—and some not even dead—can show a string of commentators that well might jaundice Cæsar's cheek.

Having confessed an unhappy ignorance of all but a few patches in this vast field, I can offer but a myopic and halting guidance in this matter of selecting sound paths and purple passages. Yet it may be of interest, to those who are not much acquainted with this mass of literature, to hear the conclusions of one who set out to extract from it a few of the juicy plums without which no æsthetic diet can be nicely balanced.

In the matter of selecting authors there was little plan. One book led to another, and each that came along, from standard works to ephemeral articles in newspapers, was of interest in a positive or negative way; each, if it had a vital spark, seemed

only to confirm me in the creed unfolded in the previous chapters.

Bibliographies are most deceptive things, and often useless to non-professionals. Even with the professional there is a suggestion of Tibetan prayer-wheels, much turned but little trusted. Such books as are mentioned, or quoted in the text, are those only that have remained vivid in my memory, whether for their virtues or defects—each is in some way stimulating, provocative, convincing, or persuasive. Each has seemed to be well worth reading; and some of them more than once.

There are great gaps yet to be filled, after which this chapter may need revising, but the conclusions drawn from a varied dietary are given for what they are worth, in the hope that they may serve as a stimulus to further research.

The first thing that strikes the dispassionate observer is the wide range and diverse pattern of the writers. From the entertaining fanfaronade of Marinetti to the solemnities of Wright is a far cry, but in between are rich assortments of styles suited to every type of mind.

Here are the stimulating adventurer and the reactionary bore, the eclectic teacher and the artistic snob; and amongst them are happily inspired masters who are resolutely pushing out the boundaries of our æsthetic perceptions. The latter write as the real artist paints: because they must; the rest because they may.

One notices with regret that art, which is after all concerned with the joy of life, seems to foster a rather grave and sober style.

Far be it from me to suggest that art criticism be accompanied by a comic strip, though on the whole the mass of it is hard

going, but we do feel that the gravity that sits well upon a Congressman or befits a bank manager is not impressive in an art critic.

The student who can enjoy reading some of the well-known authorities on painting and sculpture has my respect if not my admiration, for it must be obvious that the sister arts would never have fallen into the mess they have recently emerged from if the critics of the 19th Century had known their jobs.*

The chief function of this solid phalanx seems to be to dust and rearrange dry facts, tabulate schools and detect tendencies and styles. They are authentic as to the number of canvases and the size of the artist's family. Very occasionally a gleam of unconscious humour lights their pages.

In one handbook, apropos of the Dying Galatian or Gaul, we are shown just how "the prostrate warrior received his death blow . . . the position of the sword on the right side, and withdrawn from the wound is a strong argument against self-destruction, and the generally accepted theory of suicide is untenable in the light of later knowledge." The student is lifted out of the mundane sphere of museum study to participate in the exciting investigation of a crime. It is unfortunate for such a Pinkerton that so few artists took up homicide as a major interest.

But such stray gleams will never repay the effort of floundering through, and some critic of acknowledged eminence should be

*Since writing this I have encountered a "Primer of Modern Art" by Sheldon Cheney, unaccountably overlooked in the hurry to make up long arrears of reading. Neither over serious nor æsthetically snobbish, there is not a dull or didactic page in it. No one should decry Modern art without having read it, and to read is to enjoy. I can the better say this as I don't know Mr. Cheney from Adam, nor do I believe that he will agree with the equipose I have attempted to maintain.

employed at the public cost to make out a *Librorum Prohibitorum* of all the dusty tomes which remind one of Pope's comment on the "critics' eye" which,

Sees hairs and pores, examines bit by bit
How parts relate to part, and they to whole.
The body's harmony, the beaming soul,
Are things which [the meticulous] shall see
When man's whole frame is obvious to a
flea.

At present a student may spend precious days poring over warmed-up theories and rehashed tales that were cooked decades ago.

Roger Fry recently confessed that "Ever since I have observed that the only people worth talking to, the only agreeable companions, belong to the class that the morbidly healthy people classed as neurotic and degenerate, these words have lost all terror for me." It seems very probable that he had been beset by some of those eupeptic gentry who write guide books.

When we turn to indispensable and indisputable authorities, such as Von Mach and Gardiner, where sculpture is concerned, or in painting say Vandyke, we are still conscious of an aggressive number of facts. The average amateur will steer clear of them until his interest in the fine arts is deep-rooted and perennial; for him such authors as Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., or Lorado Taft are much happier raconteurs.

Anecdote and history need not always denote a mediocre writer, for myth and legend have time and again served as inspiration or subject matter for the great artist. Very few there are that do not enjoy a picture a little more from having heard some ancient cicerone impart the immemorial legend of its conception and execution. One's humanity is conscious of sensitive filaments

linking us with the past. Like faultless service at a rich banquet, it cannot improve the flavour of the food, but it adds its soupçon to the general glow of satisfaction. But many bring the garnishings and neglect the essential meats, and the reader must be content with subject matter for a meal. Therefore, when we meet one who weaves anecdote and history into a pleasant texture without losing sight of the golden thread of criticism, we should be thankful.

Perhaps it was repercussion from the academic tome that led to a taste for Gallic rhetoric. Rodin's lyrical appraisal of the *Venus de Milo* may bring a blush to the nice Nordic brow, and it may be described as too sensuous and ecstatic. But beneath the exotic word pictures we feel that he has a finer understanding of the *Venus* than the Teuton who devoted several pages to a discussion of the probable position of her arms.

Then there is Faure; who would not revel now and then in his luxuriant imagery. It has been complained that he takes 400-odd words, in which he ransacks the Adriatic, the Alps, the Sky, and Venice herself for colourful similes—just to tell us that Tintoretto's flesh tints were less warm than Titian's. We can only retort, What of it? for he makes of art history a living mosaic.

If an antidote to such a colourful style be necessary, we need only turn to the lesser men. Some invent symbols upon which they play with the persistence of an adolescent enamoured of a saxophone. Others show a papal infallibility more amazing than convincing. Yet others are sterile aesthetes who will never bridge the chasm that still separates the layman from the artist, for they never seem to recollect that that which is the breath of life to the artist is deplorably inconsequential to the intelligent outsider—

far less necessary than golf or the morning paper.

One of the most effective ways of reducing such high-brow stuff to its proper proportions is to read one of Aldous Huxley's trenchant and ironic little essays. He puts things wittily into perspective.

To proceed with the examination of creeds: Running in the mixed field above alluded to we find horses of a somewhat dubious colour. Those who have merely an itch to scribble or a metaphysical complex to sublimate are comparatively innocuous. But there are others who cunningly conceal the axe they would grind, and some there are who would indulge a grudge or a friend, and some go forth to snare a patron. In short, there are those who do not possess the "disinterestedness" that was Matthew Arnold's prime requisite of criticism.

And it is just here that a knowledge of the laws of art structure proves a valuable anti-toxin to the narcotic word.

We have read an eloquent appreciation of some sketches, written by a well-known authority, which proved after all to have been labour in vain, for they were not genuine. What is the inference? Is it ignorance or iniquity? It is at least a painful inexactitude. It induces the reflection that whilst we may not agree with all that Ruskin said relative to art, we can regret the disappearance here and there of the integrity that stamps his writing.

It emphasizes the need for a thorough understanding of art structure that is firm enough to resist the impact of wild and whirling words, and so balanced that it is unmoved by the blandishments of the propagandist or the special pleader.

This warning seems necessary when we encounter the following paragraph:

"The painter appears to be able to move with the utmost composure and awareness amid sensations so intense they are well-nigh insupportable, and so rare and evanescent the mind faints in seeking to hold them, and here in the region of the spirit, where the light is low upon the horizon and the very flames darkling, to see clearly as in the fullest noon, and to sever with the delicacy and swiftness of the great surgeon a plunge in the entrails of his patient."

This stupendous passage is about some still-life paintings. If we consider it from the point of view of Mencken, who avers that "a critic's motive is to function freely, to give outward and objective form to ideas that bubble inwardly . . . to get rid of them dramatically and make an articulate noise in the world . . ."—if we take that standpoint, then the passage above is an excellent and pretty ebullition of a fecund mind. As an aid to the formation of a working critique it is pure poppycock.

Nor does this sort of appreciation help the artist whose work it presumes to interpret. The critic steals his fire, and painting exciting pictures in our mind's eye, leaves the imagination exhausted and cold when confronted by the concrete canvases.

But there are other forms of evangelical intoxication. Let us examine the limpid statements set down by a well-known writer in elucidation of Cézanne: "By transcribing lines midway between their actual and optical states he achieved at once their normality and extreme abnormality. . . . by establishing the mean of linear changeability he facilitated and hastened the vicissitudes of mutation."

Is this sonorous nonsense, or do the turgid phrases hide eternal verities? To us it sounds like obscurantism carried to a fine

point; possibly it is merely a successful attempt to prove the truth of Goethe's assertion that "Art is the medium of what no tongue can utter."

After a passage of that kind we are ready to embrace effusively the flat-footed dictum of Hogarth, who says: "Strictly speaking, there is but one precise line, properly to be called the line of beauty. Fig. 1. Plate 16. No. 4." It makes it all so nice and simple.

Then there is the ultra-modern *précieux*, as bold as Hogarth, but shorn of all 18th Century grossness. One of them states: "The beautiful is a reflection of effortless vitality . . . it should grow as willlessly as finger nails or hair." Which invites the obvious retort that even so such things demand occasional cultivation; at any rate, this theory receives no support from Santayana, who says that action which is purely spontaneous is merely tentative.

Steiglitz has made some shrewd and subtle thrusts at the conventional amateur and the tradition-bound critic. Says he: "When an artist is working he is not thinking of you or me, or of anybody else; he is only satisfying a need of expressing something which is within him."

And just when his adroit manipulation has convinced us, and we yield to "the desolating tide of subjectivity," along comes Guy Eglington and convicts us all of sophistry: "Did these [masters] set out to exploit their moods, desires, and emotions? Pah! They were after bigger game. They were out to make a thing instinct with the same life that informs them. Their own desires and emotions are perhaps betrayed in moments when hand and brain wearied. But in their highest reaches it is as though God Himself had taken a chisel in hand and carved with the impersonality of a glacier." A becoming

sentiment from one who is not afraid of an occasional pleasant flippancy.

Next we examine Roger Fry's interpretation of modern art. He suggests that the modern artists "seek to express by pictorial and plastic forms certain spiritual experiences. . . . They do not seek to imitate form but to create form, not to imitate life but to find an equivalent for life."

Before passing upon such transcendental theories, which however honest and true, are a little rarefied for everyday contacts, the mere layman will turn them over and consider their repercussions.

After these lofty words is there not likely to be, when one approaches a wild and incomprehensible work, a hangdog suspicion that one's fibres are coarse, one's spirit blunt, and the reason that deep calls not unto deep lies in one's dull and cloddish nature?

Is there not also some danger that the ferment of these high phrases, rather than the visible work of art, will stir the senses and give through the mind access to emotions denied by the eyes?

There comes in here a suggestion of the hypnotic power of words, of the mind set free—a sort of painless æsthetic dentistry.

Reeling from such thoughts we clutch at the notion of another critic of high standing. Jan Gordon says: "Art cannot be understood by literature. It must be understood by the eyes and the instincts alone." Yet in the next breath the force of hypnosis is practically conceded, for he subscribes to the doctrine that "a work of art that has the power of operating only upon two or three persons, if it operates strongly enough, is great art." In other words, where two or three are gathered together in ecstasy about a product, there is great art.

But what psychologist will attempt to

measure the æsthetic content of such thrills? By this ruling an indifferent ikon raised above the heads of superstitious peasants constitutes a work of art. The flattened fossil egg of a dinosaur would rank the same could Brancusi be induced to sign it and display it on red plush, for assuredly the neurotic would indulge in an æsthetic orgasm before it.

Thus we discover nebulæ in the midst of apparently solid and scholarly critiques. We even encounter, as in the case of Degas and Matisse, the excruciating spectacle of the critics' chastely wrought theories upon the artists' method of expression riddled by the words of the artists themselves.

Thus the farther we push on the more obscure it seems; "a cloud of critics, of compilers, of commentators darkened the face of learning." "The mind becomes like a tablet crossed over and over with writing." Sensing the dangers of these trackless wastes we turn back; not in their gloom shall we discover the hair that divides the false from the true.

As we pause for meditation, certain authorities begin to stand out for their clarity and sincerity.

Jan Gordon, after a sly push or two, helps us out of the slough with this announcement: "One class loves to understand consciously and persuades itself that beauty is increased by understanding, the other class on the other hand has a horror of perceiving any of the mechanics by which art is produced. Both are wrong." . . . That leaves us on neutral ground again.

Rhys Carpenter administers a sedative to the troubled mind with his scholarly handling of his subject. He realizes that "Betwixt mine eye and heart a league is took, and each doth good turns now unto the

other"; that to none is given the power, of dubious worth at best, of shutting off their æsthetic emotions in watertight compartments, or protecting them by fireproof doors that open only to the sesame of "significant form."

He says: "Pure form to the detriment of representational fidelity, representation to the detriment of pure form, both are æsthetically mistaken, for both tend to suppress an essential factor of the æsthetic appeal." In short, that we cannot stage a play without actors; that even the most spiritual and lofty ideas must be put into intelligible words.

Jerome Eddy, with a prudence worthy of a New England farmer, opines that "it is just as bad to paint with the sole purpose of being understood as it is to paint with the sole purpose of being misunderstood."

At any rate, we may, between these nicely balanced opinions, regain our equilibrium, and even salvage a sound plank for our platform.

Not a shred of the great art of the past is incomprehensible, and we are forced to the conclusion that it never will be divorced from balance, order, and arrangement whether that organization be logical, as in the art of Greece, or instinctive, as in that of certain primitives.

Cold abstractions, or hot, will not survive, for they fail to stimulate more than a segment of the emotional orbit. Carried too far they excite only a confusion of ideas. The emotional scale of the normal human being—we know, of course, that there are no normal people, but they, nevertheless, still constitute the bulk of the population—this scale is never fully played upon unless he or she sees a real or fancied resemblance

to some conscious or subconscious experience, or to some familiar object or scene. It may be fragmentary and need not pervade the whole picture; just as the merest wisp of a scent is sufficient to strike the deepest chords in man's being.

Upon such a platform there may be room for even the extremist, for such paintings as Kandinski's call forth full responses in certain individuals. Yet such work will always remain, to the average man, merely a joyful noise of colour or a mysterious clash of line and tone. After all, he cannot be expected in these days of radio to set about learning Icelandic simply for the doubtful pleasure of reading a few sagas. Nor does it seem to him worth while to attempt an interpretation of the many abstruse and enigmatical products of to-day; or rather should we say of yesterday, so quickly has the explosively experimental stage subsided to one of orderly and progressive research.

If he has read Arthur Wesley Dow's "Composition," and grasped the principles there set forth so lucidly, he has at hand a logical and adequate standard of art. With him æsthetic aims march with a practical rhythm, and, though dealing with work of previous generations, it nevertheless provides a flexible rule by which we may measure the products of the moderns. It is, as we stated at the beginning, the foundation upon which we have based all our theories; the touchstone by which we have tested every object. In it is explicit the Greek doctrine of "Nothing too much."

Here we leave it. Between the plausible statements of the ultra-moderns and the stale restatements of the academicians there is a gulf in which accurate definition, other than this simple formula, still escapes us. Perhaps it always will, for art is a living and

changing image of the age that begets it. Posterity will judge it impartially.

Someone, quoted by Furst in his book on Woodcuts, says that "To look upon things for the sake of their external beauty is to be corrupt in spirit." An impressive sentence, to the truth of which the whole history of art bears witness.

The rasped and polished surfaces of the Pergamene sculptor measure his decadence from the chiselled altitude of Phidias as surely as the facile handling of the late Renaissance artists marks the gap that separates them from those who bear the now honoured name of primitives. Conversely, an unhealthy preoccupation with the subconscious, a Freudian proclivity for delving into the most obscure recesses, is no less, for the artist, a corruption of the creative soul.

And so the pendulum swings, from the neurotic left to the phlegmatic right. Somewhere between the artist stands, thanking whatever gods there be for his release from academic shackles.

Art, in the true meaning of the word, will always be concerned with the things of the spirit. Artists will always paint and carve the things that have moved poets to song since the world began, but only when we realize the havoc wrought by the cliché which declares that art holds up the mirror to nature, and sense its utter falsity, shall we be on the road to understanding. Nature, in its widest sweep, will always remain the inexhaustible inspiration. But, in the words of Lord Houghton, many have "yet to learn that art should purify the Nature that it comprehends . . . that the ideal loses nothing of its truth by aiming at perfection of form as well as of ideas."

Representation, as such, is happily dead,

and lamented by but a few surviving Victorians. The artist and the critic of to-day agree that out of the welter of modern creeds emerges a sound and powerful art that is the lineal descendant of the art of Hellas. Only its habit is changed to meet the needs of changed times.

The only rational attitude for the layman to assume is one of benevolent and sympathetic inquiry. The liberal will permit each devotee, whether he belongs to the delirious fringe or dwells in antique caverns, to practise his *métier* undisturbed.

For art is like religion in being all things to all men, and each according to his light in-

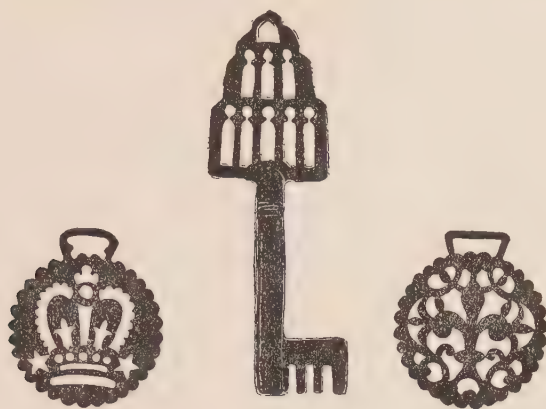
tones his little ritual and spreads his offerings before the shrine of his particular divinity.

And the outsider may be consoled to know that in the creed of the great artists there is nothing esoteric. Did not Blake more than a hundred years ago compress the essence of the modernist doctrine into a few blunt words when he said: "A man puts a model before him and he paints it so neat as to make it a deception. Now I ask any man of sense, is that art?"

Let us leave it at that, for it is not such a bad beginning for the layman in search of a sound criterion of art.



INTRODUCTION TO PLATES



Cat House Brasses, Early 19th Cent. Medieval Key.

AND now for what is the most important part of the book—the Illustrations.

Necessarily they must be inadequate; multiplied by ten there would still be gaps, but to the selection of the 260-odd there has gone more care than to all the rest of the book.

At the start we said it was to be a halfway house, and I am hoping that its fare will attract a sufficient clientèle to warrant a supplement of plates later on.

Of the three dozen here given the tone drawings have been done as scrupulously as possible, so that each example shall suffer no unequal handicap, and all permit of a fair comparison, though the finer shades will naturally disappear in any such analysis.

There is an unavoidable crowding upon some plates, but an easy solution is for the student to cut one or two variously sized rectangles in a sheet of white paper, making a mask or peephole that can be placed over the example studied. This permits of an unperplexed examination of individual cuts.

The paper may also be rolled up into a tube, looked at through which the sculpture will gain much in the suggestion of a third dimension.

Finally, I hope that the progressively less elementary chapters already given have so prepared the way that the explanation to the plates is unnecessary, but the inclusion of some few examples can only be understood by reference to the printed matter attached.

PLATE I

The sixteen compositions in outline fall roughly into five different types. They provide but an elementary analysis of main lines and shapes.

In the first row are four modern compositions. No. 1 shows a simple "primitive" organization of line and mass. All surface detail is eliminated and there is no attempt to conform to "nature." No. 2 is typical of the modern approach to still-life. The group is solidly constructed, held together by a few major curves, with which all the secondary lines are coördinated. No. 3 is a simplified landscape. The whole picture is organized, each line and shape being consciously adjusted one to the other. No. 4 presents a powerful arrangement of a few dominant lines and masses giving effective oppositions. The whole field is well filled, with no suggestion of overcrowding. All four are designs. Nos. 5 and 7 show examples built up on a series of similar lines which, in varying transitions, are carried throughout the composition. No. 5 is weakened by a touch of affectation in the tall figures, and the naturalistic treatment of the child strikes an incongruous note. Blake in No. 7 avoids such pitfalls and preserves his lines and forms intact. In No. 6 Beato Angelico boldly divides his composition by a central pillar, but binds the whole together by a series of arches steadied by horizontal and vertical lines.

Nos. 8, 9, and 10 show conscious line arrangements, in which continuity of line has been overdone. In Rodin's group there is a theatrical note, despite the evident ease with which the lines are arranged. No. 8 shows a typical artificial composition. The posed model is obvious. Though certain lines echo throughout as in 5, 6, and 7, none is dominant enough to knit the whole together. There is no effective massing, no steadying oppositions, no selection shown in the various spaces. The result is a series of insignificant forms which coalesce in an unpleasantly slimy manner. In No. 10 the line is still obvious, but poor old Guido yet

preserves a touch of the grand manner of the high Renaissance, which imparts a distinct, if unsubtle, rhythm to his figures.

Nos. 11, 12, and 13 show typical compositions of the period 1900 (*circa*), when the aphorism "Art that conceals art" was much in vogue. The three figures by Sargent are apparently casually posed, but a few sweeping curves embrace the two on the left, and contrast and balance are obtained by the vertical lines in the figure and chair on the right. The main lines are not insisted upon.

This naturalistic arrangement is seen in the still-life, where we get a most careful placing of each object. The picture is composed on the table, not on the canvas. The landscape shows the same selection of natural forms. The spaces between the trees have all received attention; the masses have had their contours arranged; branches and foliage are opposed in pleasant contrasts—all in the best traditions of the naturalistic school.

The last three examples show an utter lack of structure. The figure group, very ably modelled in the original, achieves only a sickly and unreal line arrangement. The landscape is frankly realistic—with a hole in the centre and an insistence upon correct scale and detail that renders the composition no better than a casual photograph. The last example, the original of which is an astonishingly clever painting, resolves itself into a collection of utterly unrelated lines and spaces, trivial in character and unpleasant in shape.

Whilst such an elementary line analysis cannot but ignore the modifications that tone and colour impart to a picture, yet it will be found that any composition which lacks a fine organization of its lines and masses, which is cut up into too many shapes, or concerned with surface detail rather than structural forms, never possesses fine qualities of light-and-dark, and such a major defect will always weaken even an excellent colour scheme.

PLATE I

Simple Line Analysis of Sixteen Compositions

1. Gill.
2. Marchand.
3. Nash.
4. Bourdelle.
5. John.
6. Beato Angelico.
7. Blake.
8. Delville.
9. Rodin.
10. Reni.
11. Sargent.
12. Nicholson.
13. East.
14. Rousseau.
15. Thoma.
16. Watson.

(Drawings by the author)



EAR. GILL.



J. MURPHY



J. NASH.



BONVILLE



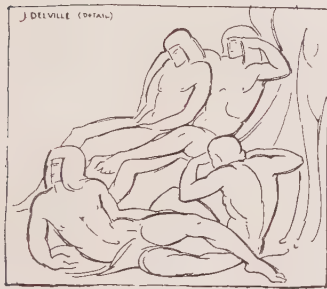
AGUTTO/JOHN



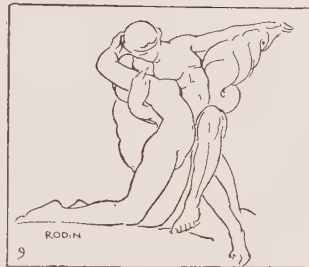
BLAT/ANGELICO



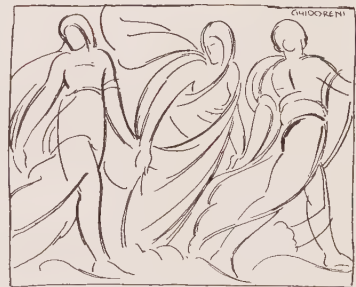
WILLIAM BLAKE



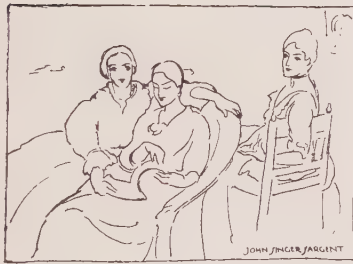
J. DELVILLE (DETAIL)



RODIN



CHIDOREN



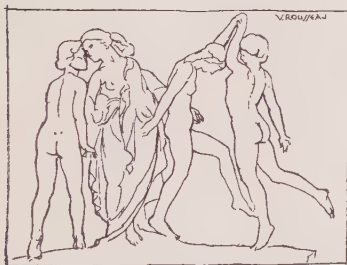
JOHN SINGER SARGENT



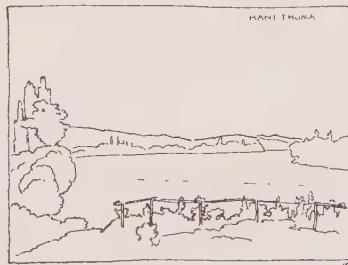
NICHOLSON



ALFRED EAST.



V. BOUVERD



HANS THOMA



G. AMERBATION

PLATE II

This plate gets down to a closer consideration of line and space, and the character such elements impart to a composition.

Figs. 8 and 9 show Western and Eastern vase contours. The contrast is, of course, obvious. Simplicity and strength versus complexity and weakness. It is an elementary axiom but often disregarded.

Top centre shows (1a) a little votive cock in base metal. A tiny thing, but what economy of line, what character it retains. (1b) still preserves its spirit but is already losing its simplicity! (1d) is a typical 19th Century treatment—feathers and little else; it is a relief to turn to the simple, direct attack of the child (1c). These four birds epitomize, as much as any four illustrations can, the deterioration of line and form throughout the ages in both painting and sculpture: surface qualities displace structural virtues.

Nos. 2 and 3 show the contrast between an Italian and an Egyptian relief. In the latter a simple, reticent line gives character to essential shapes. In the Italian panel there is over-elaboration and an emphasis upon sashes, embroideries, and coiffures rather than upon fine lines and shapes.

Figs. 4 and 5 oppose radically different treatments of straight line divisions in a rectangle. The first, taken from a handbook in general use, shows a symmetrical arrangement common since mosaic pavements were introduced. Fig. 5 shows the main lines of a Soviet poster (unavoidably on its side). One is static, the other dynamic. You would not want your ceiling subdivided as in 5 nor expect a poster to attract if spaced like 4. Figs. 6 and 7 show two more treatments of a rectangle. Fig. 7 is the Acanthus beautifully managed by the Greeks 2000 years ago, and the resort of the feeble-minded since art schools were invented. Does it excite you? Would you not expect the modern art student to experiment with strange lines and shapes as in No. 6?

The last three examples attempt to put in a capsule the essence of this matter of line arrangement, which leads on to composition in its widest significance.

No. 10 shows the reaction of the unimaginative man if asked to place a few dozen straight lines within a rectangle. From the "finite clod untroubled by a spark" we might expect the result on the left; from one with a business training or "regular habits," that on the right of No. 10. No. 11 shows one of a thousand different ways in which the average person with some idea of spacing or design might solve the problem. The lines may be variously spaced, but they would show order and arrangement, balance and symmetry leading to simple rhythms. No. 12 shows the reaction we might expect from a "modernist"—complex, nervous, experimental, anxious to explore new paths, intent upon another dimension. And don't imagine that such a complex solution lacks order and arrangement. Most of the principles we have explained in Chapter IV are here—subordination, opposition, contrast, radiation, balance, and the rhythm that arises from such components; only they are less easily seen than in more orthodox examples.

Whether you like works in which such complex organization is shown, depends a great deal upon whether you enjoy the traffic jam at Umpteenth Street, or the high-pressure existence of to-day. It is expressive of its times, which is an assurance that it is at least alive.

After this very brief summary of the possibilities of lines, we can go on to examine line and space, and mass and notan in detail. But when we encounter works that are apparently divorced from tradition, we should preserve an open mind until we have examined them to see if under all its strange and new forms there is not lurking the old regard for order and arrangement that we instinctively realize in the more familiar manifestations of Creative Art.

PLATE II

Line and Space

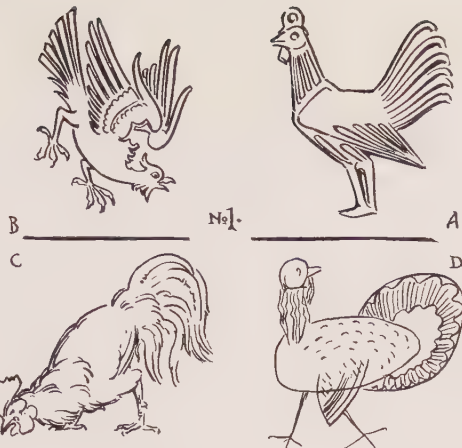
1. Cocks, Various.
2. Late Florentine Relief.
3. Egyptian Relief, Late Old Empire.
- 4 and 5. Two Treatments of a Rectangle.
6. Main Lines of Modern Design.
7. Acanthus: Traditional Usage.
- 8 and 9. Vase Contours, Occidental and Oriental.
- 10, 11, and 12. Lines within a Rectangle.

(Drawings by the author)



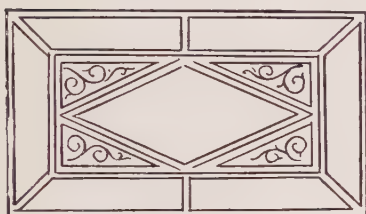
2.

CHARACTER IN



3

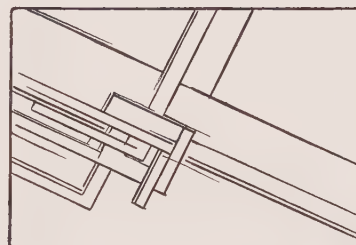
LINE AND SPACE



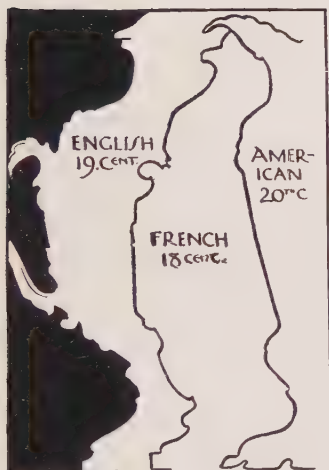
4



6



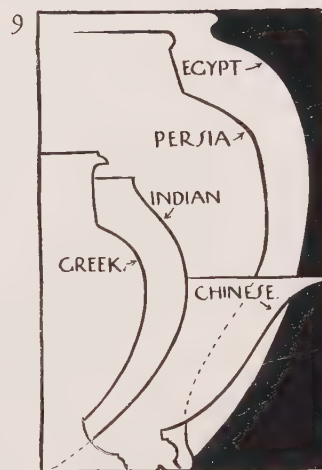
5



8



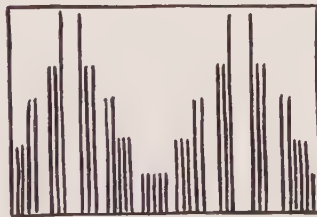
7.



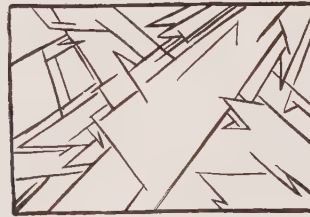
9



10.



11.



12.

PLATE III

This plate shows the logical and symmetrical spacing common to architecture and its subsidiary art of joinery.

Being geometric or even mechanical in their organization, such architectural examples are more easily analyzed than the free emotional treatments encountered in Painting and Sculpture.

Examples 5 and 7 possess the virtues common to all good furniture. Square sections and round are opposed, contrasts of long and short, vertical and horizontal lines and spaces give character to each leg. In 7 this effect is heightened and refined by added chiselwork.

In No. 8 the direct common-sense attack of the craftsman is evident. Straightforward framing of the whole; linen-fold panels, decreasing in height and scale, provide a pleasant transition to the carved panels and free cresting at the top. This diminution of scale upward is seen in the arrangement of the pier and arcading at 4. It suggests the healthy growth of a tree, firmly rooted in the ground.

In the doorway and chest-on-stand (1 and 3) the same logical arrangement prevails—as exercises in fine spacing they could not be bettered.

In the three architectural examples 2, 6, and 9, the Taj Mahal shows a simple octagonal plan.

The central dome is set off by four smaller cupolas; the four main openings, in the centre of each façade, are flanked by four smaller ones on either side. The illustration conveys no idea of the beauty of the building, but emphasizes the direct and logical solutions architects arrive at when unfettered by bookish rules.

Notre Dame (6), in essence, consists of a rectangle divided vertically into three parts, with three main horizontal divisions. The good proportion of the original divisions and the fine adjustment of the various subdivisions build up its satisfying rhythm of light-and-dark.

In the cottage below, the proportion of length to breadth, the ratio preserved between roof and upper and lower story, the dominating chimney stack and the proportions of windows and doors, all contribute to that suggestion of familiar and homelike charm we expect in cottages—but rarely get to-day.

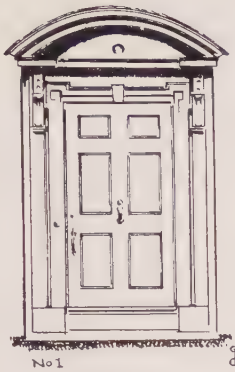
The three examples below show how this arrangement of rectangles—of cubes and prisms—is common to architecture. In the middle example there seems to be a lack of subordination. The sides compete with the centre, and the openings and the spaces between lack that fine adjustment so easily sensed in the façade of Notre Dame.

PLATE III

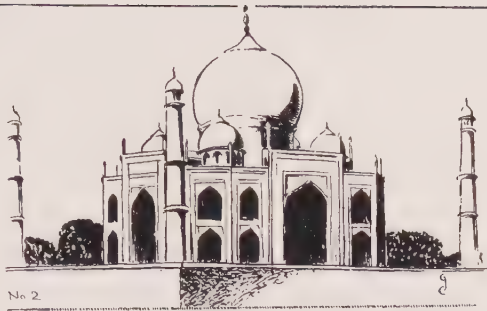
Line and Mass

1. American "Colonial" Doorway.
2. Taj Mahal.
3. "William and Mary" Chest-on-Stand.
4. Pier at Rheims (*circa* 1225).
5. Italian Chair Leg, 16th Century.
6. West Façade, Notre Dame.
7. Chair Leg, Louis XVI.
8. French Gothic Panelling, 15th Century.
9. English Cottage, Late 16th Century.
10. Pavillon, Paris, 1925.
11. City Gate, Munich.
12. St. George's Hall, Liverpool.

(Drawings by the author)



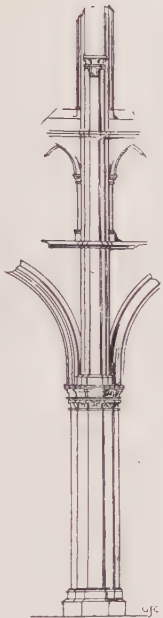
No 1



No 2



3



4



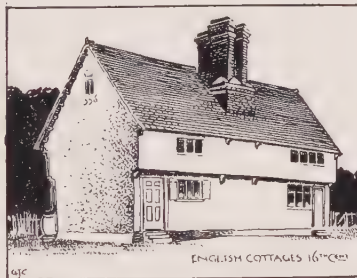
5



Notre-Dame de Paris.

JK 73

6



ENGLISH COTTAGES 16" CM

9



7



8



DAVILION - PARIS 1925 E.



CITY GATE MANNICH

11



S' GEORGES HALL - LIVERPOOL

12

PLATE IV

The Kutab Minar, No. 1, Plate IV, is another direct solution of an architectural problem. It shows the same transition in spacing to be observed in the tower of Chartres (No. 3). The diminution is, of course, accentuated by the taper of the tower, but is steadied by the encircling galleries. The vertical lines are opposed by decorated horizontal bands, and further contrast is obtained by alternating square and round sections in the perpendicular divisions.

In the tower (3) more intricate adjustments of horizontal and vertical members are to be observed, and an added rhythm is obtained by the employment of many arches. These complex subdivisions are held together by an insistence on a few primary divisions.

The effective transition from square tower to octagonal spire may be compared with the way in which Wren manages a similar problem in the Tom Tower (2). Here we see a very satisfactory composition of straight and curved lines. Another unobtrusive but skillful transition is to be seen in the way the flattened curves of the Tudor arch of the gateway give place to the pointed ogival forms of the upper story and roof. The example immedi-

ately below (5) is in strong contrast, showing the severe and dignified lines of the Italian Classic period, before their architecture was smothered under a mass of applied "decoration" and sculpture.

The examples 4 and 6 show how modern architecture resolves itself into the same old problem of adjusting prisms of varying proportions one to the other. Only now the prisms stand on their ends instead of lying on their sides as in the last example on Plate III.

Symmetry and balance with the subordination of parts to whole are the fundamental principles underlying nearly all architecture of to-day. The old castle or mediæval building, with its charming irregularity, was less the result of conscious planning than the cumulative effect of various additions by succeeding generations. Nothing can surpass them in delightful and fascinating effects of massing (or in their frank disregard for economy of space and general utility), but even so their beauty arises from a similarly fine, if irregular, adjustment of mass to mass.

It is all a matter of fine spacing—which, of course, is easier said than done. Happily, our job is simply to distinguish the fine from the poor spacing.

PLATE IV

Line and Mass

1. The Kutab Minar, Delhi.
2. The Tom Tower, Oxford.
3. Southwest Tower, Chartres.
4. The proposed Pittsburgh University.
5. Palazzo Verzi, Verona.
6. Sheldon Hotel, New York.

(Drawings by the author)

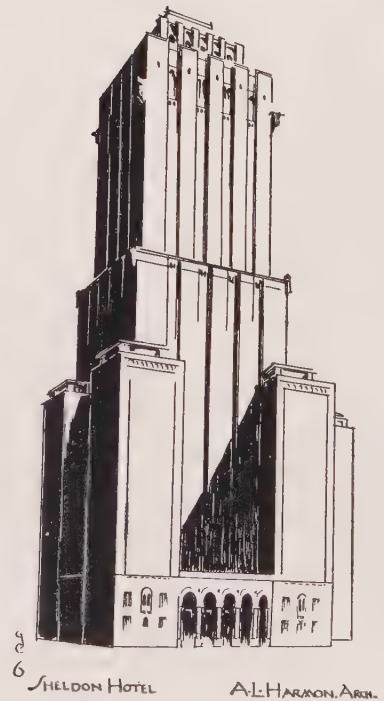
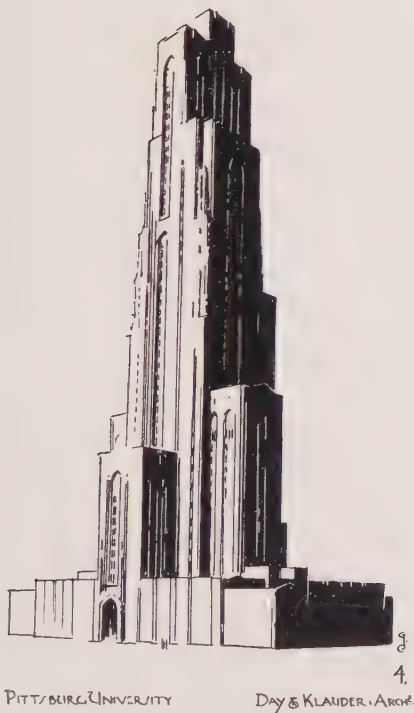
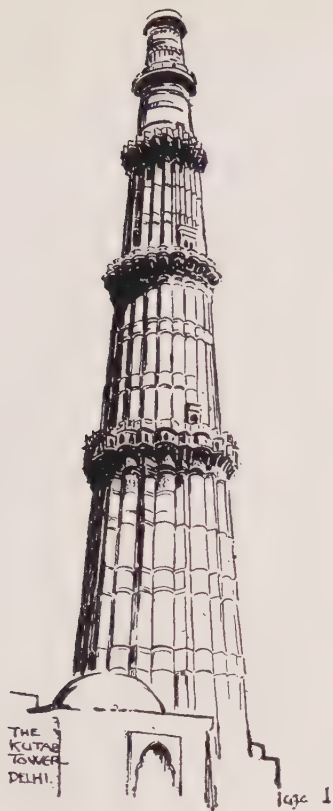


PLATE V

The last remark brings us to a consideration of what are good shapes and what are bad. And this is a touchy matter, for some like one kind and some like another, and these days you had better impugn a man's honour than his taste.

The two plates V and VI are attempts to analyze some related shapes and to appraise some that are divorced from their context. Both lead on to composition in several values.

At the top of Plate V is a woodcut by Eric Gill (losing a great deal of its power in a reproduction so small); and an English Brass of 1415 and two modern German Bookseller's marks. The figures being two dimensional, they offer no problem in depth and depend simply upon their contours and their strong simple shapes. Each seems perfect in its way, and I don't see how any of them might be improved.

But it is not so easy when we attempt to analyze painting from the point of line and light-and-dark. The fifteen examples on Plates V and VI are not offered as conclusive evidence that there are good and bad shapes, either collectively or in isolation; merely that there are such things for me. In the first row Plate 5 are three details from (1) an early Italian fresco, (2) a Greek vase painting (3), a Japanese print—none of them preoccupied with the third dimension. With their effective patterns of light-and-dark, their various and contrasting shapes, and their clarity of statement, each seems to me to be a fine example, particularly the Greek, with its powerful rhythmic line. In the second row we have details from three modern artists. In No. 4 we have a like opposition of light-and-dark, though

the forms are blunter than those in the detail above. In 5 there is a fine adjustment of line and mass, as good in its way as in the Greek detail. In 6 there appears a wavering line and a repetition of almost similar spaces that contrast unfavourably with the preceding examples, *but* these three have a very decided third dimension and a colour quality that cannot possibly be judged from a detail in line.

But, again, I feel that we can be positive when discussing Nos. 7, 8, and 9 from, respectively, a typical Academy portrait (style 1800-1900), a French primitive, and a late Renaissance (Italian) picture. You may not prefer the clear-cut, even harsh forms of No. 8 to those immediately above it, but you must admit that they are fearlessly stated and make up a pattern full of character and interest. It contrasts very favourably with the spottiness of No. 9 where the attention to "accurate" drawing has resulted in a loss of both line and pattern. Finally we need not emphasize the general debility in both drawing and structure so apparent in the hazy impressionism of No. 7.

Ask yourself which of these nine details you prefer. Which shows powerful lines, fine shapes, and effective light-and-dark. But remember that certain masters since Leonardo cannot be analyzed in this direct manner.

It can be applied very effectively to all works into which a third dimension does not enter or in which the sensuous appeal of colour is not predominant. Modern painting in many cases will resist such a test, and all works must be judged in the ensemble, for other qualities than line and space and notan may assert themselves.

PLATE V

Light-and-Dark—Silhouette and Shapes

1. Woodcut by Eric Gill.
2. English Brass, 1415 A. D.
3. Booksellers' Marks, German, 20th Century.

1 to 9. Details in three values from:

- (1) Masolino; (2) Greek Vase, 5th Century, B. C.; (3) Toyokuni; (4) Suzanne Valadon;
(5) Moreau; (6) Matisse; (7) Modern Portrait; (8) French Primitive; (9) 17th Century Italian.

(Drawings by the author)



No 1

Rudolf
Koch Gestaltung
Offenbach

3



No 2



PLATE VI

The lower half of Plate VI is, possibly, the most controversial portion of this book.

It represents an attempt to find out what shapes were considered good or bad by about thirty people—the majority of them trained in æsthetics. The results were instructive, amusing, and often paradoxical; they need a good deal of explaining, and even then would remain inconclusive.

Let me say that my sympathy is with those who exclaimed, "God save us from intelligence tests in art"—that way sterility lies. The shapes were arranged so that, as nearly as possible, they made no pattern on the paper (the names and black borders have been since added) and each one was requested to pick out, in order, the shapes he or she preferred. The idea was also to see if there was a consistent or reasoned or instructive choice. Eliminating three examples that averaged 50–50—pro. and con., the choices of those possessing that fiercely contested quality we call taste lay with A, B, and C. The same people generally placed G, H, K at the bottom.

Now, it is, of course, impossible to judge a shape correctly when it is wholly divorced from its context. We may instance Cézanne's refusal to alter, at the request of a patron, a detail in the bottom corner of one of his pictures, advancing as a justification that he would then have to alter the whole of the picture.

Now, there is something in that, especially for the artist who has laboured over the work. But it seems to me that ordinarily a shape so important did not belong at the bottom corner, where it would be likely to deflect the eye from the natural orbit it invariably follows when looking at a rectangular picture—a path that seeks the central field and leaves the corners slightly out of focus and undefined.

The artist is inclined to worry about details that are not noticed by even sensitive and acute observers. Whistler made a great decoration of his signature (Did I hear Whistler! Pha!), and others are in a state of trepidation as to where to sign as inconspicuously as possible. (The truth is that very few Galleryites trouble about the signature unless they are uncertain of the authorship and can't afford a catalogue.) On the other hand, it has been the custom to laugh at the late Lord Leverhulme for cutting down his portrait to fit above his mantelpiece when reflexion should convince one that almost any Academy portrait would be better for drastic trimming.

But to return to the question, are there good shapes and bad, or do they depend entirely upon their juxtaposition?

Let us realize that many modernists cannot be judged by such a cold analysis. Van Gogh and the Expressionists show no definite edges, though their brush strokes usually build up into a strong composition. Signac and Seurat, though devoid of definite edges, were always in command of fine shapes and coherent design. Degas cannot always be divorced from his colour, and Lautrec loses much of his quality in such a logical appraisal. A face in a picture will dominate shapes that would, without such a feature, appear spotty and competitive. No one test can be conclusive.

But again, I feel that some shapes are definitely good and others decidedly bad. I cannot conceive

of any picture, worth a second glance, constructed out of the elements seen at K, even when tone and colour be added. The outlines are like the tracks of a feckless ant, or the edges of paper gnawed by rodents.

Compare them with the purposeful contours enclosing bold shapes used by Piero della Francesca in B, and ask yourself the question, which shows character and power?

Whether you prefer the angular and flattened characteristics of A to the richer outlines of C may be a matter of individual preference, just as some like sour pickles and others sweet, but the person who would prefer K to B would probably take ginger pop in preference to fine dry Chablis.

In looking at the upper half of Plate VI the lower half should be covered. Here we have various patterns of light-and-dark, various types of line, and six very different qualities resulting. At No. 1 we have a superficially attractive and cleverly conceived design, but the appeal is not wholly æsthetic. After a little, while the pattern, which so effectively foils the figure, appears a little mechanical, and the long curve from elbow to cat's tail becomes too obvious. Compare it with the Greek figure opposite. Beautifully balanced, easily fitting the circle, consummate in its oppositions of light-and-dark, and with a various and changeful outline which, nevertheless, easily escapes mere complexity. It shows the trained and able Greek vase painter at his best.

The Korin tree which separates the two figures is also a little masterpiece. Note the crisp, clear-cut forms, the strong line of the trunk from left to right foiled by the delicate lines of the branches growing in an opposite direction. Here is a most skillful artist functioning consciously and intelligently.

None of these three examples offers a problem in values other than those of line and light-and-dark. In the three below let us first compare the two figures. In the matter of light-and-dark both are good. From the point of view of precision, delicacy of handling, and nicety of statement, No. 4 is far superior to No. 6. But if you are looking for other qualities than those you may not prefer it. Like a discreet biography, it has been politely edited. No. 6 is a more sincere and vital record. There is no attempt to clean up corners and soften asperities, and some will prefer the rugged honesty and spirit of the one to the polished urbanity of the other.

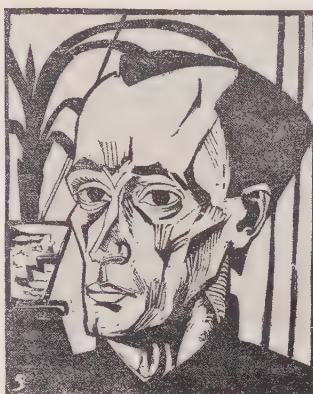
Now as to the head (which is reproduced from the *Graphisches Kabinett*, by I. B. Neuman). Into this enters largely the strange intensity, distressing to many, that is typical of the modern artist who cultivates subjective moods and is possessed by the subconscious. It is a powerful thing, well knit together, and cut without a trace of botching or fumbling. It cannot be ignored. If you seek healthy and happy faces you will pass this by. In any case, it is not to be framed and hung in a bedroom. But what a relief to take it out of a folio and examine it after a surfeit of magazine covers.

So, if you agree that such notes may be sounded by a simple woodcut, you will admit that in a full orchestration of line and tone and colour these may be overtones which are not always immediately perceived.

PLATE VI

Light-and-Dark—Simple Values, More Shapes

1. Woodcut, F. Vallaton (*International Studio*, New York).
 2. Screen, Korin (*Studio*, London).
 3. Greek Vase, 5-4th Century B. C. (*Der Kunstgeschichte*).
 4. Woodcut, Nicholson (*Studio*, London).
 5. Woodcut, E. Heckel (J. B. Neumann).
 6. Linoleum Cut, Arthur Young.
- A, B, C, G, H, K—Details in Silhouette.



A

B

C

G

H

K



EGYPTIAN: P. della FRANCESCA: GREEK: IV Cent BC: SPAGNOLETTO: BRANGWYN: DEBAT PONJAN:

PLATE VII

These six examples show an analysis of the notan to be found in landscape. The three main values have been retained and the general tone key preserved as nearly as possible in each case.

The first is a solidly constructed composition by Derain. There is no attempt at the picturesque, no "composition" in the generally accepted sense. Yet, devoid of colour and of the personal quality no summary analysis could supply, it retains a stability and cohesion that many naturalistic landscapes lack. The only criticism I could offer is that the square shape on the left bulks rather heavily, but in the original it is more securely balanced by the figure on the right.

The Corot (2) strikes an almost realistic note beside it, but it is by no means so photographic as it appears at first sight. The "typical" Corot is so well known, and so many forgeries exist, that it is only by examining a number of his works such as in the Moreau Collection, that it is possible to realize what a great artist he was. In this example we see a very careful selection of lines and shapes. The effective and steadying contrast of horizontal and vertical lines, a pleasant distribution of light and dark areas; the whole built up in the naturalistic rather than the structural manner employed by Derain.

No. 3 shows another naturalistic treatment, but stronger and more compact than 2 or 4. Cotman was one of the first artists of his age to risk the introduction of a few uncompromisingly angular lines into landscape. Those who would enjoy landscapes, faultless in technique and splendid in their design, to which is added the glamour of a past age, should look up the "Studio Year Book," autumn, 1923, for Cotman is a master of effective notan.

Mauve's picture (4) shows a pleasant composition with an unexceptional use of natural forms. The thin tree trunks foil the heavy mass of foliage, the large patch of light against dark on the ground balances the dark mass of the trees. The whole has a

poetic charm but lacks the permanence of 1 and 3.

No. 5 is a frankly bucolic landscape by Gainsborough. The movement starts from the bottom centre, each line and mass is nicely adjusted. The silhouette of the trees carefully considered, the bright values of the sky counterpoised by the light patches in the foreground. Everything speaks of the grand manner, when the violence and gloom of Salvator Rosa had subsided into the picturesque statements typical of English landscape before Constable. Nevertheless, it is far from puerile. If it has grace and charm and sentiment, qualities now somewhat taboo, it holds them within reasonable bounds by a structure that has many of the elements of good composition.

The last example (6) is a three-value analysis of a sea-and-landscape by Marin. Admittedly it is an extreme example. It gives no suggestion of the spots of fine colour, and it loses more by such a summarization than the others. But taking all this into account it appears incoherent, formless, and spotty when judged by our standards. Some of Marin's ships bounce along over choppy seas in a manner that makes one feel quite squeamish, and his views of Manhattan give a convincing impression of the overpowering confusion of Downtown. But in others the absence of any organization, or of any rhythm, however violent, repels the eye. Yet we must remember in appraising such works to respect the convictions of men like Alfred Stieglitz who feel that such pictures are worth years of effort and sacrifice to bring them to the notice of Art Lovers.

But I am willing to admit that others may perceive qualities to which I am insensitive. When such a failure to react to shapes, tones, and colours occurs, the only course to pursue is to keep an open mind, pass on to other manifestations, and after a period return to see if more light has broken through. Such things have, at any rate, the virtue of not being painted to please.

PLATE VII

Notan—Landscape, 18th to 20th Century

1. Derain.
2. Corot.
3. Cotman.
4. Mauve.
5. Gainsborough.
6. Marin.

(Tone analyses by the author)



PLATE VIII

Here we have six more compositions; landscape, figure, and still-life. All modern, and some hardly more recognizable as regards subject matter than the last example discussed. But all seem to me to have a structural unity that compares favourably with the more traditional compositions in Plate VII. In fact, we need not elaborate; they speak for themselves very ably, despite the small scale, lack of colour, and loss of nuance that such analysis entails.

- (1) Derain: as always—solid, structural, finely balanced, stripped of irrelevant detail.
- (2) Segonzac: well designed, strong oppositions of line and mass and light-and-dark, giving stability to the whole.
- (3) Segonzac again: another design, this time of moving curves. Too poster like, but skillfully contrived contrasts and oppositions and a fine pattern of light-and-dark.
- (4) Another Derain: tree trunks used to form a curvilinear composition. Less obvious than No. 3, it is well knit together. The opposing curves and the dark patches either side of the central trunk give it stability and balance without dull symmetry.
- (5) Moreau: figures hewn out in harsh planes; almost abstract in its treatment of forms, but achieving an interesting arrangement of lines and shapes. As a design less admirable I think than the others.

- (6) Fresnaye: a still life devoid of the usual representative subject matter. Actually a problem in the nice adjustment of angular shapes, planes, and tones. It builds up into a more satisfying design than the figures.

In this last example, when closely studied, there is to be observed behind the apparent disorder a logical use of the two powerful elements of composition, contrast, and opposition. We see long and short lines, wide and narrow angles, big and little, light and dark patches, very skillfully placed. It is as near as art can get to it, an intellectual exercise, inasmuch as each shape and its relationship have been very logically thought out. But for that very reason it fails to evoke an emotional response. And do not expect to receive any intellectual increment from it; enjoy it as an interesting exercise in composition employing abstract shapes.

Taking the six compositions together, each in its way exemplifies, in a greater or less degree, those laws of composition which we discussed in detail in Chapters III, IV, and V.

We cannot discover or discuss the more subtle qualities of composition in a three-value interpretation. Yet, if stripped of colour and of all but fundamentals, they stand up under the analysis, it is owing to their structural integrity; their observance of the flexible but compelling laws of fine composition.

PLATE VIII

Notan—Various Compositions, Modern (Three or Four Values)

- 1 and 4. Derain.
- 2 and 3. De Segonzac.
- 5. Moreau.
- 6. De la Fresnaye.

(Tone analyses by the author)



PLATE IX

Eight compositions, ranging from the primitive Italian to the modern illustrator. The great lesson here emphasized is the abiding value of a few powerful main lines and masses in building up a fine composition. It took much longer to reduce the trivial work at bottom centre (7) to three main values than was required for 1 and 2 together.

As to the latter they need no interpretation. The serene simplicity of Giotto contrasts admirably with the proud consciousness of power in M. Angelo's figures. Both are superb in their own way, and in the latter, despite the reduction to three values, we get more than a hint of the powerful third-dimensional quality at his command. Passing on to the lower group, No. 3 shows a very symmetrical composition by Cézanne. Naturally, in such a summary we can judge of none of those spatial tone and colour relationships which he was the first to develop fully. And it will, of course, be self-evident that we cannot judge Cézanne by comparing one of his (in my opinion) least admirable works. He should be approached later via his still-life and landscape by way of A. Vollard's magnum opus. It is not easy to sense the depth-relationship of lines and tones and colours, of which he was the acknowledged master, from ordinary illustrations.

To return to No. 3. At first we may be repelled by the coarse and clumsy treatment of the figures, a defect that in his nudes Cézanne never succeeded in overcoming. Stripped of all but main values, the composition appears somewhat vermicular in its general arrangement, and we may quarrel with the placing of the two central figures. But despite all this it possesses stability and cohesion. The figures pile up into an articulated whole, with a thrust and counterthrust of line and mass that are far more satisfying than the easy rhythms of No. 4,

and more coherent than any of the three examples below.

The Fantin Latour detail (4) shows the suave and graceful lines common to late 19th Century French paintings. Obvious and rather shallow though they are, they look comparatively powerful when compared with the commonplace stageyness of the example below (7) with its irritating detail. The fragment (5), attributed to Courbet, shows a far more satisfying and less immediately evident rhythm than No. 4, and it possesses a fine and unobtrusive balance in its spotting of light and dark.

And now to make a comparison with 1 and 2, and 6 and 8. The two latter examples are by modern illustrators. In No. 6 is a rather fascinating pattern of light-and-dark, nicely balanced and full of life and sparkle. But, deprived of its representational features, the looseness of design is apparent, and there is felt to be a noticeable lack of subordination. It needs some dominating lines and patches to give it stability. No. 8, deprived of the original's exquisitely finished modelling and delicate detail, falls apart as a composition.

It is, we admit, rather unfair to draw such comparisons, because the illustrator often works under conditions that would have cramped the style of M. Angelo. The contrast is made merely to emphasize those permanent values which every fine work of art must possess. The wonder is not that 6 and 8 look spotty, but that they stand the comparison at all. Either of them is immeasurably superior to the salon picture that separates them, and as illustrations they are in the first rank. If they lack the simplicity and power of Daumier it is partly due to the insistence of Art editors upon certain matters not connected with art. As it is, they have qualities not always found in Academy pictures.

PLATE IX

Notan—Figure Compositions (Three Values)

1. Giotto.
2. Michelangelo.
3. Cézanne.
4. Fantin Latour.
5. Courbet.
6. Dean Cornwell.
7. Lefebvre.
8. Eugene Savage.

(Tone analyses by the author)

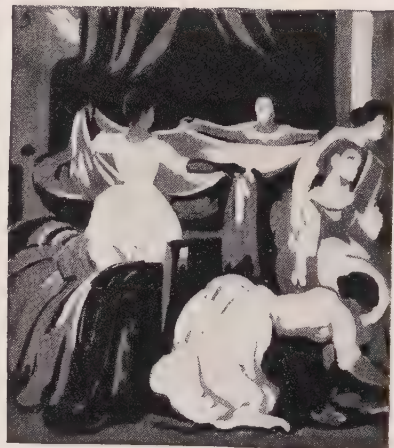


PLATE X

Here we have nine compositions by students in the Painting class of Teachers College under the direction of Professor C. J. Martin. By their aid, we can carry the study of tone relationships still further, and develop our sense of notan.

The three examples at the top are flower arrangements. Not still-life copies, but careful adjustments of shapes and tones with a view to fine compositions. Flowers are used as subject matter, but there is no intention of making literal transcripts or botanizing. Again I think such examples speak for themselves, and it is not difficult to appreciate the effective and satisfying way in which the various shapes and tones have been built up into a finely organized and unobtrusively composed pattern of light and dark.

Rest assured that, in each one, every shape has been carefully, at times even painfully, worked over; but there is nothing laboured in the result. Each has the sincerity that comes only of conviction and intelligent effort.

Of course, if you prefer the transparent dewdrop upon the petal, the butterfly poised on the trembling tendril with antennæ miraculously delineated, you will go to Van Huysum, who, let it be admitted, did an incredibly fine job in his way. But he and the Dutch still-life painters sacrificed the structure of their pictures for such exquisite detail. It was de-

sign these students were after, and they all achieve their aim.

If we examine the striking pattern of No. 6 we readily perceive the strong line organization giving a bold rhythm to the whole, and feel the effective massing of light-and-dark.

What is, perhaps, less easy to observe is that each shape has been thought out with a scrupulous regard to its position and its size; each one has character and no two are alike. We note the just placing of the bird's dark head against the light, nicely balanced by the heavier masses beneath; the careful avoidance of ambiguous passages, clever flourishes, and easy technical effects. The centre composition possesses similar qualities but expressed in a more subtle or less "decorative" manner.

This sensitive organization of all its elements; the studied avoidance of repetitions of lines, angles, and shapes; the careful search for fine notan is not such an easy matter, even when the need for such things is felt. In some works it is expressed instinctively, but consciously or unconsciously it must be expressed in any work that hopes to appeal to the emotions. It is no exaggeration to say that a vast mural or a great canvas which lacks such essentials is of less significance than the students' works shown here, for it is the visual appeal of such plastic elements that provides an æsthetic experience.

PLATE X

Notan—Full Values, Various Compositions. Painting Class, Teachers College

1. Olive Riley.
 2. Florence Mitchell.
 3. Maryhelen Byers.
 4. Jessie Paul.
 5. Florence Mitchell.
 6. Lynd Ward.
 7. Fred. King.
 8. Grace Riblet.
 9. Anonymous
- (Photos by Fred. King).

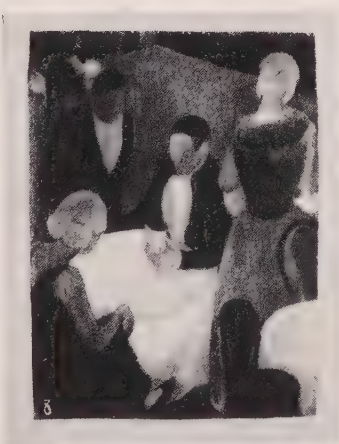


PLATE XI

Regarding this plate, it is probable that you begin right here to experience the emotional appeal of lines and shapes and tones mentioned in discussing the previous illustrations. Even in the small reproductions, it is not difficult to distinguish the different notes struck by the various examples.

Now that you are developing your appreciative faculties, I hope more and more to leave the illustrations to speak for themselves. It always seems more than a little presumptuous to "explain" a picture, though certain manifestations would appear to excuse such temerity. All I wish to do now is to point out certain qualities which beginners, brought up in the traditional atmosphere of improving anecdotal pictures, framed and forgotten on the walls for years, might be tempted to ignore.

No. 1 shows a portrait group by a very young untutored artist. It has all the frank ingenuousness of any statement by an unspoiled child. And it has a very satisfactory pattern also. The same is true of the portrait at 3, which in the original has the fine colour which no child could accomplish. If it were by a child we should enjoy and admire it; but such is our perversity that, knowing it to be by a man of fifty we allow prejudice to sway our feelings.

In between (2) is a detail from a Russian primitive. A splendid pattern with a fine adjustment of space to space. Severe and precise in its lines and shapes, but as naïf as the examples either side of it, and so sincere and unaffected, we realize, in the words of the old book quoted by Roerich, "these works have been painted with honest hand and decent purpose and with noble love of embellishment, for the people to see themselves here as standing before the Highest." That spirit we cannot expect to feel very often in the art products of a mechanized and industrialized age.

In 4 and 5 we have works of a very different order.

No. 4 is a composition built up out of leaf forms: clean, precise, very skillfully drawn and painted, held together by its radiating lines and its nicely balanced notan. It shows a fine sense of design plus a subtle realization of tone values; it is a decoration of no mean order.

How do you feel about the next example, No. 5? Isn't it rather exciting? The ceaseless weaving of lines and shapes imparts a sense of swift and noiseless movement, masterfully retained within the composition. Though it suggests the interplay of resistless forces, or the rush of strange shapes through the vasty deep, yet I never wanted to translate the title. It seems less, not more, pleasing with a caption beneath it.

The unorthodox little still-life at 6 offers no such mystery. It is provocative by reason of its distortion of shapes, but more so, I think, because of its crisp Gothic forms, and its clear-cut pattern of light-and-dark. It says what it has to say with the clarity of the Russian Primitive, but in a language that already hints at the rich and complex vocabulary of the modern artist. These illustrations 5 and 6 are taken from "Formwille der Zeit," a little book showing work by pupils of Franz Cizek, which every student should possess.

The bottom row, when compared with the one above, looks chaotic and meaningless. The design by Fresnaye, No. 7, is less satisfactory than the example No. 6 on Plate IX, despite the added curves contrasting with the angular forms.

Picasso at No. 8 is even less satisfactory. The realistic treatment of the balustrade does not jibe with the abstractions in the centre, which themselves disclose tentative and uncertain treatments.

No. 9, as a pattern, is spotty but less inconsistent than No. 8 and bolder than 7, but both the rhythm and the humour seem a trifle flat to-day.

PLATE XI

Compositions—Various. Line and Notan and Other Values

1. Portraits by a Child (*The Arts Magazine*).
2. Russian Primitive (*International Studio*, New York).
3. Portrait by Matisse (*International Studio*, New York).
4. Decoration, Georgia O'Keeffe (A. Stieglitz).
5. Composition, The Storm, School of Franz Cizek.
6. Still-Life, School of Franz Cizek.
7. Fresnaye ("Valori Plastici").
8. Picasso (*Les Peintres Français Nouveaux*).
9. Lalapie (*International Studio*, New York).

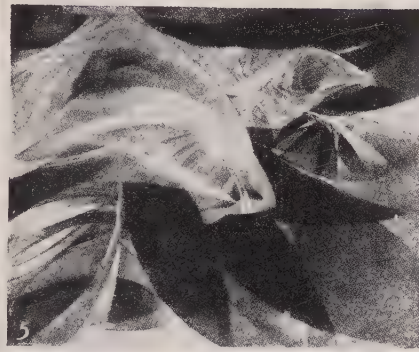


PLATE XII

The two composite plates, XII and XIII, stress the unity that binds together many diverse art forms. In these various and, chronologically, widely separated works, we may note how the same fine quality of light-and-dark runs throughout the whole group. This refreshing and all too rare character of line and notan, that individualizes each separate example, also gives a kinship to the assemblage.

It links in harmony such diverse manifestations of design as a Japanese print and an English water colour, a modern still-life painting and an Italian brocade.

When we stop to analyze this common attribute, we see that it consists primarily in the possession of a distinction, a "strangeness," as Bacon put it, in the quality of its line and pattern.

Each example has a touch of the unexpected, but is not bizarre; it may be naïf, but is never childish; more often it is the result of conscious and intelligent effort. But, whether more or less spontaneous, each example sounds a note that is stimulating but not violent—the eye travels with interest and pleasure over each composition irrespective of subject.

Let the reader get hold of any dozen average examples and compare them.

Examining Plate XII in detail, definite qualities emerge. No. 5 is far from the accepted still-life group, but its fine pattern and its rhythmic line movement are as good in their way as the more obvious

rhythm in the Italian brocade (7). In the modern German woodcut (6) with its arresting and even strident note, we find the laws of composition by no means neglected. Strong oppositions are set up by the lines radiating from the corners, which tie and steady the vigorous contrasts. Furthermore, a not too obtrusive repeat of lines and angles may be observed, giving as strong a structure and as powerful, if more staccato, a rhythm, as we see in 1, 3, 5, and 7.

In No. 3, a design for stained glass, we find simple elementary shapes, dictated by the technique of the craft, and the design is bound together still more securely by the rhythmic repeats in the curves of the reapers' arms, their hats, and the sheaves.

A somewhat similar note is sounded in the Japanese print (1). In the panel of lace (2) it is not so much the quaint figures that attract at first as the interesting variety of shapes and their oppositions which build up a sparkling pattern of light-and-dark. The centre panel, No. 4, shows a fine blending of representation and design. The Temptation is illustrated with scrupulous fidelity to tradition, the figures easily hold the centre of interest and are effectively foiled against a natural background. Yet the balance of line and notan is so well distributed that all representational detail might be blotted out, and we should still have a very effective pattern of light-and-dark.

PLATE XII

Composite—Major and Minor Arts

1. Japanese Print.
2. Venetian Lace, about 1600.
3. Stained Glass, R. Seewald.
4. The Temptation, Flemish, Jan Mabuse.
5. Still-Life, Marsden Hartley.
6. Woodcut, A. Gerbig
7. Velours, Asia Minor



VARIOUS EXAMPLES OF PAINTING AND DECORATION OF DIFFERENT PERIODS UNITED BY A SIMILARITY OF STRUCTURE.

PLATE XIII

In this plate all the examples have a vitality that speaks for itself. Each one shows fine spacing and excellent notan, with the satisfying rhythm that springs from an understanding, innate or acquired, of these elements of good composition.

The various qualities, such as fine line and contour, right space relationships, effective contrasts and oppositions of lines, tones, weights, textures, etc., may be studied in each. Observe the spacing of the horizontal bands on the Persian drug-pot (4) and the oppositions of the vertical brush forms. In the inlay (7) note the elementary but adequate rhythm set up by the repetition of circles; also the effective relief of the solid bird forms against the lacy background. More interesting and personal treatments are seen at 3 and 6.

We need examine only the three centre-pieces in detail. In the Greek vase (8) we see the fine severe contour of the vase containing and limiting the spirited line and notan of the figure design. Within such a shape the lively pattern is seen to great advantage.

In the Cotman (2) we see a splendid fusion of topographical fidelity and æsthetic perception. The scene is adequately portrayed, the technique is masterly, and at the same time these qualities are not gained at the expense of the more important attributes of a picture. Cotman, with all his accuracy of drawing and scholarly technique, retained a superb command over essentials.

The centre illustration (5) is by an unknown French Primitive. It achieves all that Cotman accomplishes, with an added intensity and emotion that speak of a profound spirit. The reader should turn to Plate XXXVI and examine more easily the pure and severe line and the exquisite drawing. For a close study of its poignant detail and an interesting and full account of this picture refer to Guy Eglington's article in the *International Studio*, June, 1924. But even in the

small-scale reproduction we can note the masterly handling. The figures are most accurately delineated; without resort to distortion or exaggeration, they are both convincing and moving. With a firm hold on truth, the artist easily avoids the realism that snared the later painters of religious pictures. The tragic story is told with a fine alloy of emotion and reason, of pathos and dignity, and a most uncommon accuracy in delineation is subordinated to an instinctive feeling for the right placement of line and mass. It shows how subject, the bane of such a vast proportion of the works of the 17th and 18th centuries, can take its place without despoiling a picture of its primary virtues.

If we attempt to delve more deeply into the structure we may note the arresting silhouette of the figures against the background and the intense aliveness and precision of the line that traces it. In the whole work there is no commonplace or dead line or shape and, scrupulous and minute though the finish is, all trivial detail is eliminated. We feel, rather than notice, how the lines of the arms and legs of the dead Christ are effectively yet unobtrusively opposed by the contrary lines formed by the heads and the hands of the mourners behind. Such examples of natural and instinctive composition are to be found in the works of all the Primitives, and many splendid illustrations may be taken from the works of the early Italian painters.

Such an examination as we have attempted above will result in a fuller appreciation of any work of art and in an increase of power on the part of any student. But there will remain in any work of genius qualities that defy analysis and that must be felt by each individual alone.

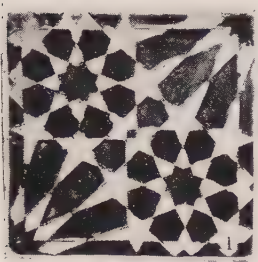
I have lingered upon this last example, perhaps unduly, but henceforth, as threatened once or twice before, the illustrations will be allowed to speak more and more for themselves

PLATE XIII

Composite—Major and Minor Arts

1. Hispano-Moorish Tile.
2. Cotman, Landscape.
3. Metal Disc, Merovingian.
4. Persian Pot.
5. French Primitive.
6. Coptic Embroidery.
7. Inlay Marble, Italian, 14th Century.
8. Greek Vase, 5th Century B. C.
9. Small Iron Grille, Gothic, 14th Century.

(Illustrations by courtesy of Metropolitan Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, Archives de France, *International Studio*, New York.)



DIVERSE EXAMPLES ASSEMBLED TO STRESS THE STRUCTURAL AFFINITY IN ALL FORMS OF FINE ART.

PLATE XIV

After running rapidly through the last dozen plates, there may be a need, for the beginner, at least, to pause; and this can be employed in examining less intricate works. Hence, this page of simple geometrical patterns. They offer no perplexing appeal of subject and conceal no vague or mysterious problem. Everything is plain sailing, and little explanation is necessary.

No. 1 shows the satisfying pattern growing out of the repeat of circles within a containing circle. No. 3 shows the added character of a Gothic treatment.

No. 2, which consists of three different linen-fold panels, is an elementary problem in spacing vertical lines; just as in designs for shirtings, from which we may progress upward to classic porticoes and modern skyscrapers.

In 4 and 6 we see rhythm in its most elementary form, though the delicate borders on the outsides are too small in scale to contain the chevron or ogee pattern.

The centre panel proves how an effective composition may be built up out of a few simple units. In the shield are strong contrasts of light-and-dark. More subtle contrasts appear in the lettering, of thick and thin, round and square. Nos. 7, 8, and 9 are Spanish tiles showing the most obvious yet quite pleasant and satisfactory repeats.

Repetition, plus a feeling for good spacing, is at the bottom of all these designs, and they show the simple rhythms that arise from such frank, straightforward treatments.

PLATE XIV

Minor Arts—Repetition and Rhythm

1. Gold Disc, Egypt, 6th Century (British Museum).
2. Linen-Fold Panels, Flemish, 15th Century (Boston Museum).
3. Door Knocker, Late Gothic German, 17th Century (Victoria and Albert Museum).
- 4 and 6. Italian Pavements, 13th Century (Brogi).
5. "Della Robbia" Heraldic Panel, A. D. 1512 (Victoria and Albert Museum).
- 7, 8, and 9. Spanish Tiles, glazed, 17th Century (Musée des Arts Décoratifs).

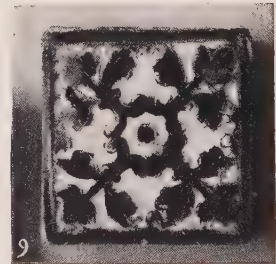
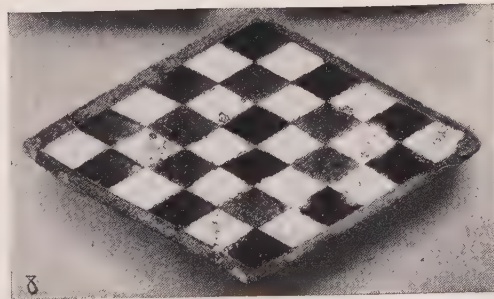
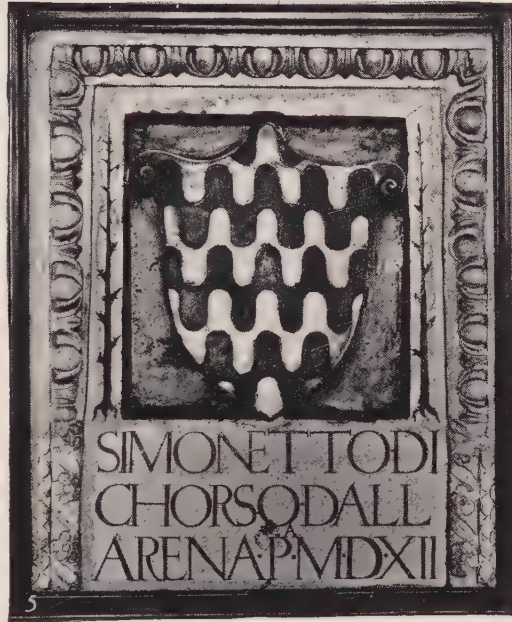
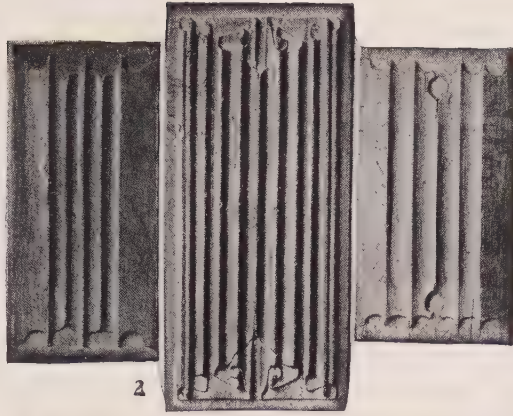


PLATE XV

Here are more complex patterns, of a much higher order than those on the previous page.

In all but 6 and 9 the same elements of repetition and contrast may be observed, carried out on a finer scale and in a more intricate and interesting way.

In 6 and 9, line and notan are the primary qualities that constitute their strength; each shows a beautiful contour containing a fine pattern of light-and-dark. No. 6 possesses in a superlative degree the sparkle and life that are common to all the other

examples on this plate. Each one shows the faultless handiwork of the old craftsmen. Each deserves a plate to itself.

In the endeavour to stress the universal appeal of fine notan in diverse handicrafts I have been tempted to assemble too many examples on one page. And I have been tempted to attach a magnifying glass to each book, for every item here would stand enlargement up to 100 diameters. Each one is so fine that I shall leave the reader to enjoy them without interruption.

PLATE XV

Minor Arts -Line and Notan

1. Wood Panel, Gothic, French, 14th Century (Musée des Arts Décoratifs).
- 2, 3, and 4. French Lockplates, 15th Century (Victoria and Albert Museum).
5. Spanish Lockplate, 16th Century (Victoria and Albert Museum).
6. Chinese Bowl (Musée des Arts Décoratifs).
7. Italian Brocade, 15th Century (Musée des Arts Décoratifs).
8. Venetian Lace, 17th Century (Victoria and Albert Museum).
9. Ivory Crozier, French, 12th Century (Cluny) (Archives de France).

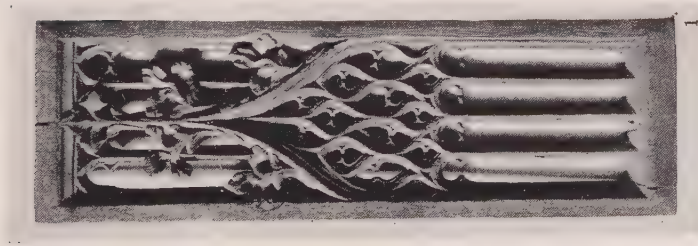
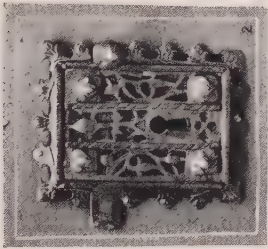
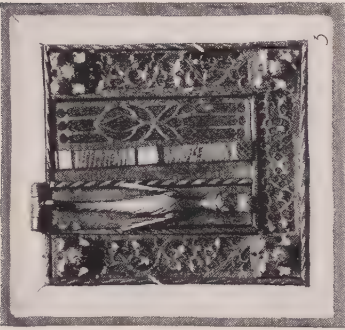
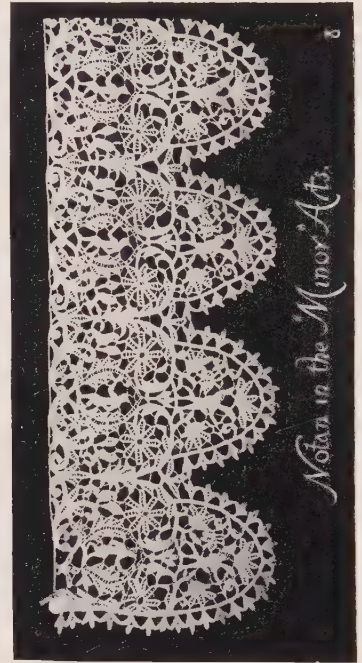
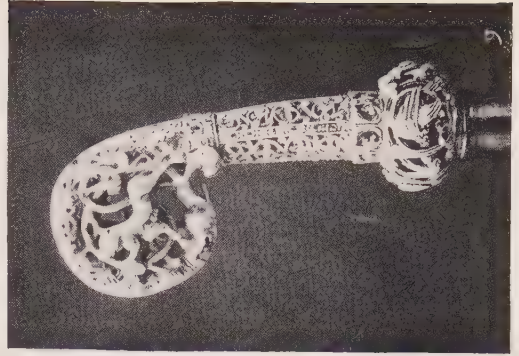
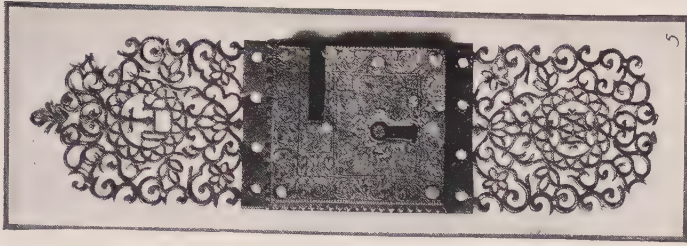


PLATE XVI

This plate shows a few of the products of the old chairmaker. Nothing old-fashioned or clumsy about them. To be sure they are antiques, but they have authentic and imperishable virtues. They were made primarily for use, and they expressed inimitably the spirit of their times. Each one possesses the fine line and proportion that are of the essence of style. The Carolean chairs at 4 and 6 cannot compete in delicacy of proportion with the Sheraton and Hepplewhite above, but they are finely spaced and vigorously turned and carved. Now study the Louis XV chair.

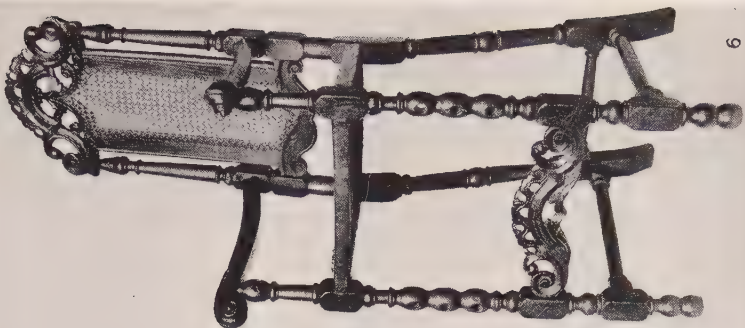
To take the Louis XV chair, No. 5. Observe its seductive yet not too opulent curves; its suggestion of utter comfort and feminine luxury. Contrast it with the clear-cut cabriole leg and the severe horizontal line of the Queen Anne stool.

They both stress the subtle qualities to be discovered in curved lines—more readily observed, perhaps, in a chair than in a sculptured group. Whilst the stool has a dignity and character that the chair lacks, the latter is, nevertheless, a splendid example of curved-line composition. One may crave the contrast of a straight line somewhere, but without actual comparison it is hard to realize the gap that exists between this superb Bergère and the average museum piece of the same period. The reader with time to spare might look up Roger de Félice's very readable book on French furniture of Louis XV and, comparing the sister example there illustrated, note the improvement that comes from the substitution of gimp for the round nail heads. Of such trifles is perfection built up.

PLATE XVI

Minor Arts—Furniture. Line and Proportion

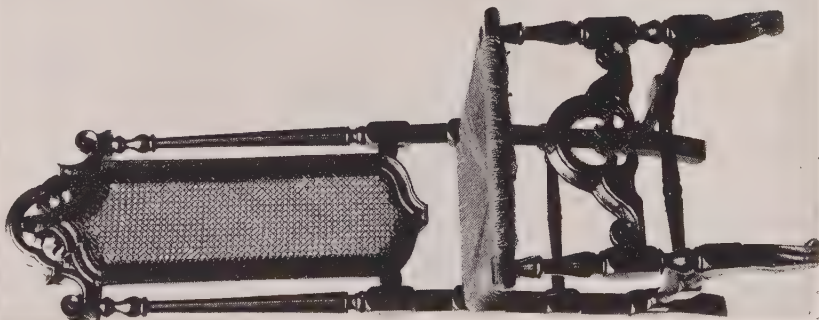
1. Sheraton Chair, 18th–19th Century (Victoria and Albert Museum).
2. Queen Anne Stool, *circa* 1715 (Victoria and Albert Museum).
3. Hepplewhite Chair, Late 18th Century (Victoria and Albert Museum).
4. Stuart Chair, *circa* 1685 (Victoria and Albert Museum).
5. Louis Quinze Bergère, Middle 18th Century (Musée des Arts Decoratifs).
6. Stuart Child's Chair, *circa* 1685 (Victoria and Albert Museum).



6



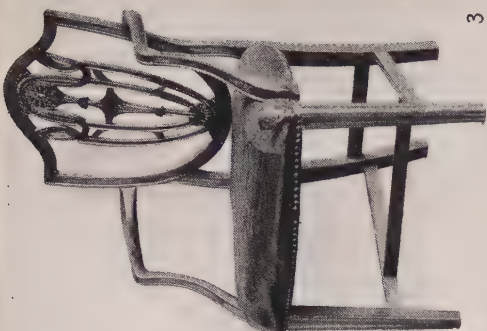
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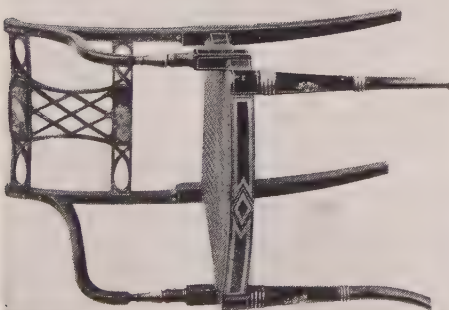
4



2



3



1

PLATE XVII

With the exception of the perfect little pitcher (1), which is the work of an early American craftsman, all the examples on this plate are what may be termed Industrial Art. And in industry Beauty only survives on the basis of Utility.

The lines and proportions of the Lanchester car speak with the same tongue as the work of the old silversmith; there are character, style, and pedigree all over both.

The body of this car will doubtless, in time, appear old-fashioned, but its lines, like those of an old ship, will never look commonplace. And, come to think of it, the magnificent lines and lovely spread of sail in the old China clipper were the result of very similar conditions—e. g., the striving for speed and efficiency—resulting in what seems, at times of depression, to be the last creative effort in New England that was æsthetically complete.

The hot-water jug (3) is another successful outcome of the frank acceptance of the limitations imposed by materials and methods. Subtle in contour and good in proportion, it is as fine in its way as are 1 and 2.

Below are three examples in which the straight line and mechanical finish of the machine have

imposed restraints cheerfully accepted, and in their way actually beneficial. Deprived of flourish, and too honest to suggest a specious handicraft finish, they rely solely upon their good proportions for their character and style; the right relationship of horizontal and vertical lines, the nice adjustments of one rectangle to another—in short, good spacing—is at the bottom of their success. One could criticize the attachment of the mirror in No. 6 (it seems to call for a happier transition from the top of the dresser to the upright supports of the glass which would give more stability and connection) and it can never rival the attractions of a bow-fronted Hepplewhite bureau, with its rich veneer and finely selected ornament and delicate bandings. But the Palmer Jones dresser has in it some of the abiding elements of beauty, and has the not inconsiderable merit of being within the reach of thousands who would never get within measurable distance of a Hepplewhite. And a very necessary merit, too, for the arts and crafts, if they are to survive in industry today, must go out into the market-place and suffer the inspection of the chafferer and the bargain hunter.

PLATE XVII

Industrial Art—Line and Space

1. Early American Silver (Metropolitan Museum.)
2. Lanchester Car, 40 h. p. (*D. I. A. Yearbook*, 1922, Ernest Benn, Ltd.).
3. Hot-water Jug, Dryad Works (H. H. Peach).
4. Cottage Dresser (Heal & Son).
5. Bronze Doors, Crittal Freeman (*D. I. A. Yearbook*, Ernest Benn, Ltd.).
6. Dressing Chest (W. Palmer Jones).

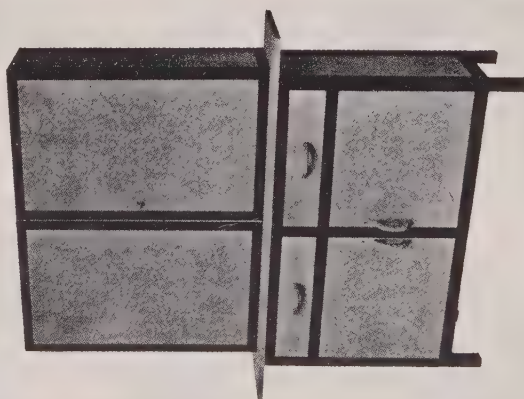
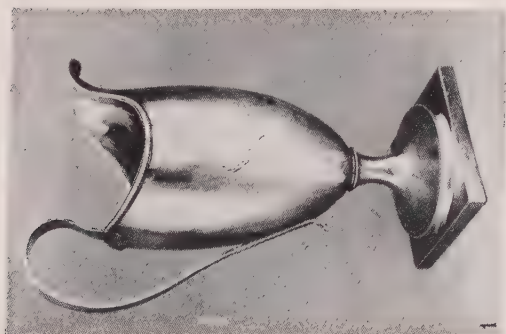
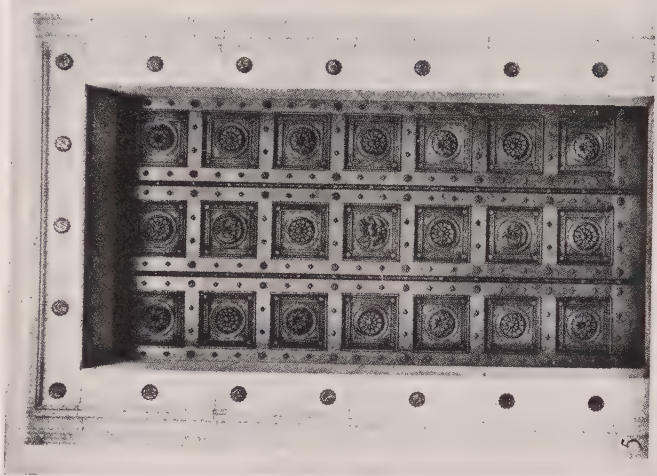
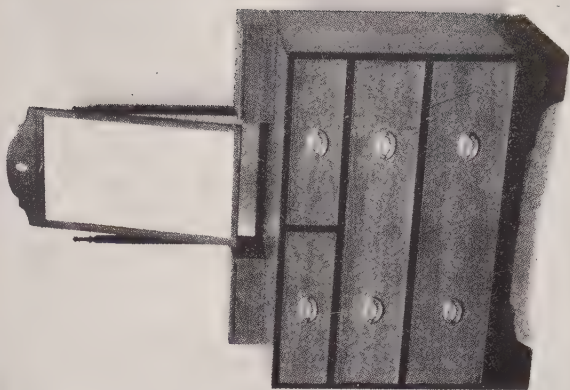
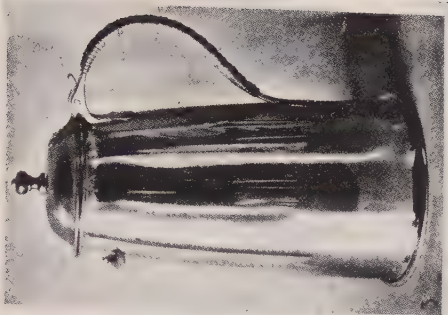


PLATE XVIII

Continuing our study of line, here is a page with almost a perfect score. (The handles of the amphora might be better.)

Extraordinarily subtle lines and contours are its outstanding characteristics.

The Greek helmet is a splendid curvilinear composition, and how well it consorts with the powerful simplicity of the head of Ephebus.

The Amida shows the suave rhythms of the

figure echoed by the lines of the effectively pierced back piece, and set off by the intricate profile of the base.

The brush work on the neck of the Cypriote vase has in its way as fine a quality of notan as the striking pattern of the Greek amphora. But there they stand, calm and unassailable; all we can do is to accept them and be thankful.

PLATE XVIII

Minor Arts and Sculpture—Line and Notan

1. Greek Helmet (Metropolitan Museum).
2. Amida, Kamakura Period (Metropolitan Museum).
3. French Helmet, 14th Century (Metropolitan Museum).
4. Cypriote Vase (Metropolitan Museum).
5. Head of Ephebus, from Olympia (Alnari).
6. Greek Black Figure Vase (Metropolitan Museum).

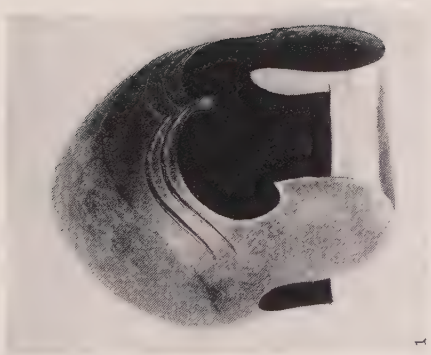
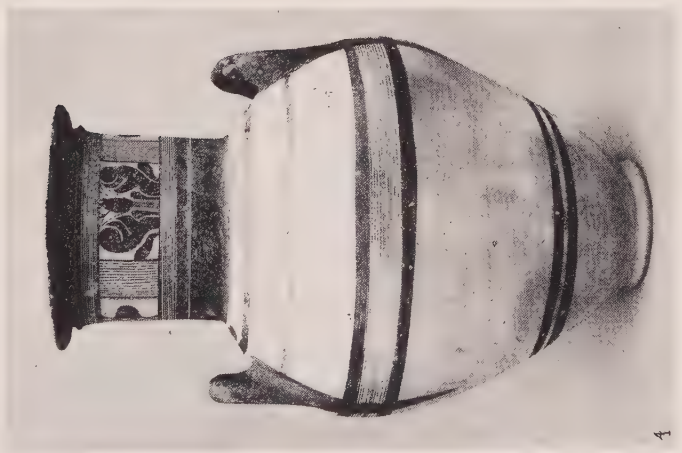
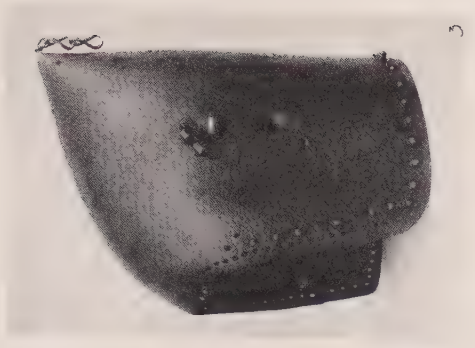
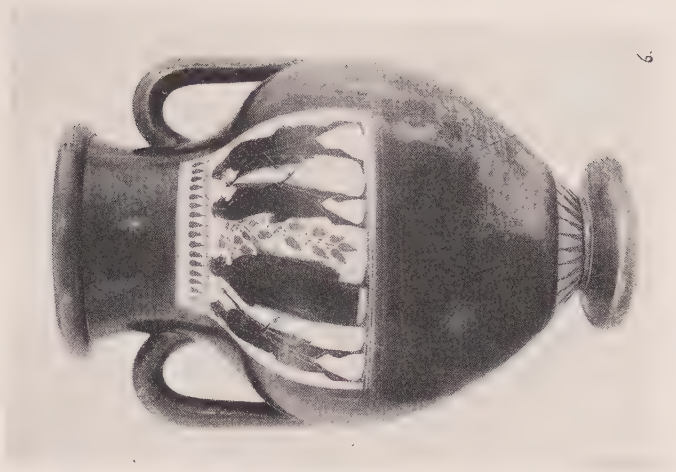


PLATE XIX

It would savour of the imbecile to attempt an explanation of these two admirable works. Like any perfect manifestation, each carries conviction with it. One can no more explain such things than one can explain a faultless rendition of a prelude. It has an inevitability about it which one questions as little as one questions an earthquake, a flower, or a new baby. The most brilliant appreciation would subside to mere chatter beside it. Comparing them with the vases and fans produced in such profusion in the 18th Century in Europe, one is tempted to ask whether the Occidental ever had an understanding of beauty as applied to the Crafts.

It sometimes seems that in art, as in religion, anything that is fine comes out of the East, and suffers a sea change in the transference. The

student inclined to linger too long over the flesh-pots of the West might turn up the following publications, and review such worship in their light:

"La Ceramique dans l'art de Extreme Orient." Riviere.

"L'Orient Musulman." G. Migeon. Editions A. Morance.

"Eumorfopoulos Collection. Chun to T'ang." Hobson.

"Chinesische Fruh-Keramic." Oscar Rucker.

"The Art of the Chinese Potter." Hobson & Hetherington.

These books together with the publications of the Shimba Shoin and the *Kokka Magazine*, will give an excellent idea of the heights to which the Potter of the Middle and Far East soared, and the possibilities Oriental artists realized in flat decoration.

PLATE XIX

Minor Arts—Line and Notan

1. Japanese Fan (Musée des Arts Décoratifs).
2. Sung Vase, A. D. 960-1280 (Metropolitan Museum).



PLATE XX

The proper caption for this plate would seem to be "see explanation to Plate XIX." But though such absolute beauty cannot be explained, we may discover underneath such imponderable qualities certain elements that help to confirm our theory of Art Structure.

In the portal (1) are to be observed the simple oppositions of well-spaced vertical and horizontal lines set off by the sweeping curves above them. Contrasts of round and square in line and section, of plain spaces against richly carved, all contribute to the validity of our rules for composition.

The Portail Royale, No. 3, speaks for itself so compellingly that we don't want to bother about laws of composition, but if we stop to examine it in detail, we notice similar contrasts—the heads against plain pillars, the fine sequence of spaces from the feet of the figures up to the heads, the preservation of a dominant vertical note throughout—and so on.

The cluster of pillars (5) has a perfection of proportion, the just-right relationship of height to

width, of subdivision to subdivision, that is a joy to behold.

And the capital at 6 is superb. It pleases me immensely, and that is all one needs. But if we are to produce anything half as good as this old mason's work we must probe down to find out how he did it. Such a close examination usually discloses an observance of those laws of art structure that we discussed in Chapters III, IV, and V.

Note the repetition of certain dominant lines in the volutes at each angle echoed in the contour of the "Lion's" mane, in the turn of the rider's neck and head, and in the griffon on the left. These lines and masses start a powerful rhythm which is modified and rendered less obvious by the resultant fine notan. Note the richness of it, with its bold contrasts of little dark patches within broad areas of light, and sharp oppositions of light against the massed shadow on the left.

Losing, as it does, owing to its reduction, the capital still remains a little masterpiece of light-and-dark.

PLATE XX

Architecture—Romanesque and Gothic

1. S. Door, St. Pierre at Aulnay, 12th Century.
2. Romanesque Arch, 12th Century (Metropolitan Museum).
3. Royal Doorway, Chartres (Archives de France).
4. Finial, Chartres, 13th Century (Archives de France).
5. Cluster of Pillars, 13th Century, French (Victoria and Albert Museum).
6. Romanesque Capital, 13th Century, French (Metropolitan Museum).

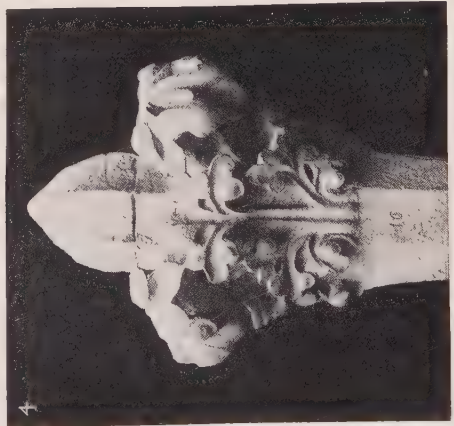
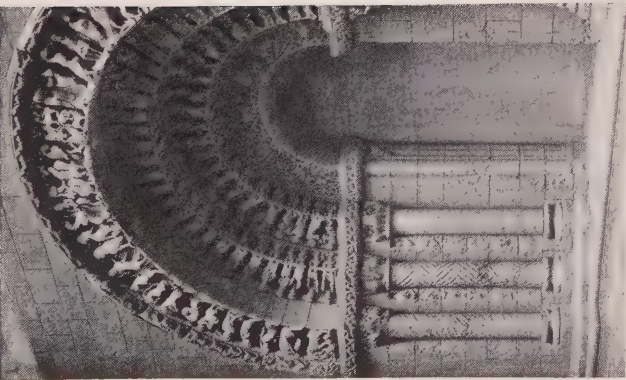
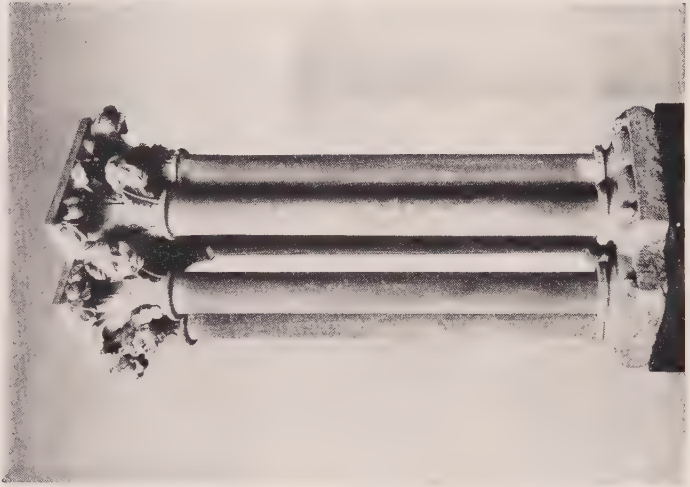
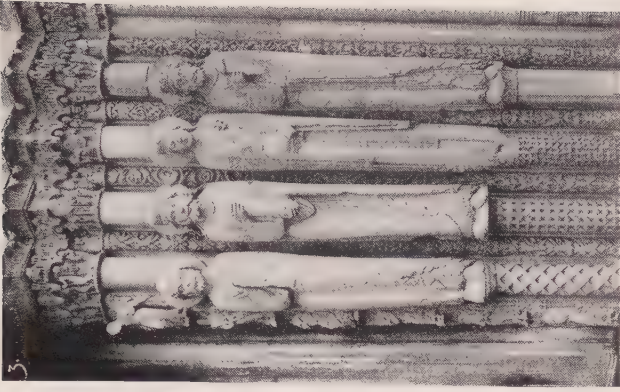


PLATE XXI

In the centre (2) is the Temple of Niké Apteros. With its pediments gone, its cornice despoiled and tied together with ugly girders, it still shows the fineness of proportion that seemed the birthright of the Greeks. The photograph itself, by Alnari, is a striking example of the splendid notan such adjustments of line and mass produce.

The pure beauty of the proportions of the Parthenon (3) should be compared with the massive, even clumsy, adjustments of the Temple of Neptune (1). In both 1 and 3 may be noted the satisfactory rhythm that arises from the repetition of a unit into the distance. To get some idea of the spirit that informs Greek architecture, the student might turn to "Griechenland," by Holdt-Hofmansthal (Wasmuth: publishers).

Donatello's Musicians' Gallery (5) shows how his lively panels are effectively held together by the fine primary spacing of the architectural members—cornice, frieze, pilasters, and console. Within these limits, his uncommon skill and exuberant fancy have free play.

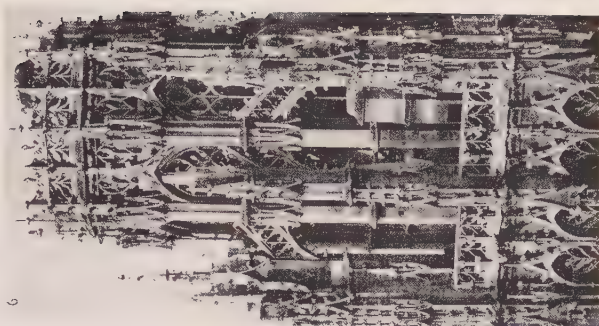
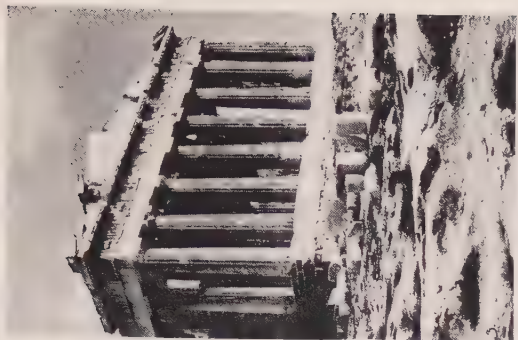
Nos. 4 and 6 fail because they ignore these necessary restraints. The eye worried by a mass of fretted detail turns with relief to the serenity above, or to the well-defined organization of 5.

Not all Hindu architecture and sculpture is so extravagant and restless as this Temple at Odeypore, nor all late Gothic so flamboyant, but this tendency to ignore the fine spacing of structural units and to overload with carving and sculpture is the source of all decadence in architecture.

PLATE XXI

Architecture

1. Temple of Neptune, Paestum (Brogi).
2. Temple of Niké Apteros, Athens (Alnari).
3. Parthenon, Athens (Alnari).
4. Hindu Sculpture, Odeypore.
5. Donatello. Musicians' Gallery, Florence (Alnari).
6. Butter Tower, Rouen.



6



PLATE XXII

Here, again, is a plate that bears an unblemished ensign for all to see.

We will confine our attention to pointing out the adherence of each example to the common laws.

The heavy Norman arches (1) with their deep and rude sections still show a command of fine proportions—the essential element of good architecture. The later “decorated” nave (3) shows the rapid development of the art in less than two hundred years. The spiritual note of the slender upshooting piers and pointed arches is evident, though the scale is too small to permit an examination of the fine adjustments of line and space.

The canopied seat (2) is utterly right in its proportions. It is also an excellent example of splendidly managed transitions. Note the ascending delicacy in scale from the box seat up to the traceried canopy and pierced cresting. Observe the way the inverted cresting breaks up and softens what would otherwise be a too-heavy shadow beneath the projecting hood.

The same fine adjustment of space to space is

seen in the simple partition (5). Five very plain linen-fold panels, ten unpretentious balusters, leading the eye up to the more intricate but still uncomplicated interlace above. Just ordinary commonsense, straightforward craftsmanship, but how uncommon in its retention of beauty's essence.

Now compare the figures 4 and 6. Chinese and early Gothic of the school of Berry. They possess much the same spirit that is to be felt in the nave of Winchester (3). Either would take its place there without a ripple. But visualize the commotion a later Italian figure would make in such serene and lofty aisles.

[Unfortunately, there is no need to imagine such an incongruity. Worse travesties are already in existence, for the walls of these magnificent edifices are frequently cluttered up with a mass of utterly banal and offensive mortuary “art,” the result of an all too human itch to perpetuate an empty name, even at the expense of a sacred and beautiful fabric.]

PLATE XXII

Architecture and Sculpture

- 1 & 3. Winchester Cathedral, 12th and 14th Century Arches.
2. French Canopied Seat, *circa* 1500 (Metropolitan Museum).
4. Chinese Figures in Wood, T'ang, A. D. 600 (Metropolitan Museum).
5. French Panelling, 15th Century (Metropolitan Museum).
6. French Gothic Sculpture, 12th Century (Metropolitan Museum.)

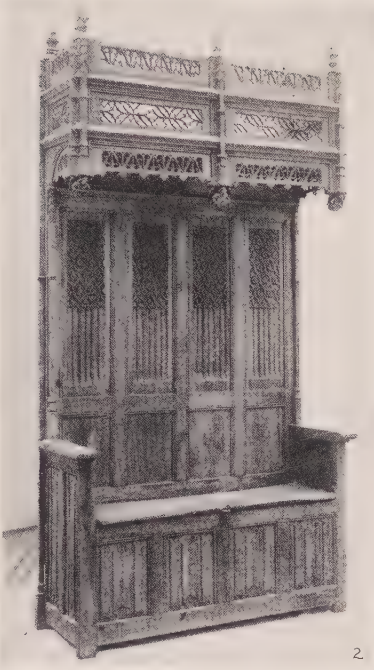
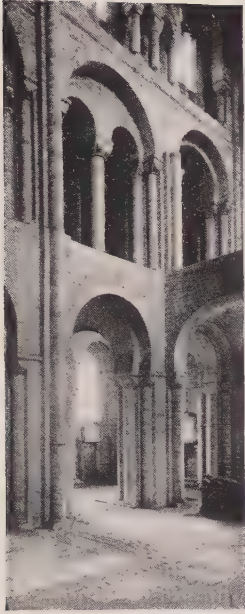


PLATE XXIII

This plate, despite its very varied types, presents a certain homogeneity.

The Kwannon (1), 7th Century Japanese, has the impersonality of all early sculpture, and shows much the same qualities, differentiated by racial characteristics, as an Archaic Greek figure. It is calm and aloof, with a hint of infinity in its simple lines.

We cannot deny the kindred serenity of Archipenko's figure (3), to which is added an utter refinement of the sensuous appeal, in exciting contrast to the elemental vigour of Maillol (9).

We can make the transition to Maillol more readily through 2 and 5 and 7. In the Tanagra, a commercial little thing in its day, how splendidly the anonymous old craftsman maintained the finer qualities of sculpture. Though it possesses the charm one would expect and desire in such an intimate statuette, its kinship with the colossal harmonies of Mestrovic is evident. (One is about eight inches, the other about eight feet.) In both we feel the crescendo of interest and diminuendo of weight upward, noted in discussing plate 3, which imparts stability to each work.

Figs. 4 and 6 show fine plastic relationships and

tactile values, based upon the study of the female torso. The line and tone and mass of No. 6 are peculiarly satisfying. We can leave it to the psychologists to determine just how much of its attraction is æsthetic and how much merely sensuous.

But any one would agree that No. 8 lacks either appeal. Rodin's profound study of an old prostitute has before now been heralded as art. It certainly is not that, though it is a sermon in bronze—very fit for the vestibule of a mortuary—or the antechamber of a great surgeon, but it has no place in art.

It may seem rather gratuitous to pick on Rodin like this, but it is done in no carping spirit. Rodin was an intrepid pioneer along a difficult road that in the end led nowhere. He knew and accomplished infinitely more than any other sculptor of his day, and modern artists should be eternally grateful to him for having pushed certain developments to their logical conclusions and erected for posterity a sign, warning them against an arduous path that led but to an impasse.

But for his indefatigable exertions, modern artists, in all probability, would be still toiling up its middle steep.

PLATE XXIII

Sculpture—Comparative

1. Kwannon, Wood, Japanese, 672-686 A. D. (Victoria and Albert Museum).
2. Tanagra, 4th Century, Greek (*International Studio*, New York).
3. Alexander Archipenko, Woman's Torso, marble.
4. Leon Underwood, Woman's Torso (*Art Worker*).
5. Ivan Mestrovic, Distant Chords..
6. Frank Dobson, Woman's Torso (*Art Worker*).
7. Maillol, Pomona (Druet).
8. Rodin, The Old Putain (*Studio*, London).
9. Maillol, Striding Woman (Druet).



PLATE XXIV

This plate includes very diverse types of sculpture. If you appreciate the rhythms of the 12th Century, capital (6), it is difficult to ignore the equally satisfying movement in Archipenko's group (5). If you do, you are letting subject matter and unfamiliar treatment of detail obtrude unduly, to the detriment of larger things.

Likewise, the strange and compelling arrangement of line and mass in the Negro Mask is not dissimilar to the savage intensity of Zadekine's sculpture (8). Look at the four examples solely from the point of view of line and tone and mass relationships, and then turn to more orthodox examples above. The polished and considered shapes of Cecil Howard (2) may lack the candid approach of the Archaic sculptor (3) but his masses are better related, if more mannered, in their placement.

The fact that this little figure (3) flanks one of the supreme achievements of all time in sculpture should not blind us to the repetitious use of lines and shapes. At either end, we have examples of the work of Rodin (1) and Gérôme (4), perfect in execution, showing profound knowledge of the figure, but a little artificial in conception. Rodin shows the extraordinary facility with which he handled masses, and even the illustration hints at the lucent quality he imparted to his marbles. It was a kind of impressionism that is well worth attention. Gérôme (4) succeeds in an apotheosis of the model; utterly finished, seductive, and intimate. The best of its kind extant. But not sculpture as we expect it to-day, not (let it not be whispered near the Luxembourg) even art.

PLATE XXIV

Sculpture—Comparative

1. Rodin (Luxembourg).
2. Cecil Howard (*International Studio*, New York).
3. Greek, Early 5th Century B. C.
4. Gérôme (Luxembourg).
5. Alexander Archipenko.
6. French Capital, 12th Century.
7. West African Mask (*International Studio*, New York).
8. Zadekine ("Valori Plastice").

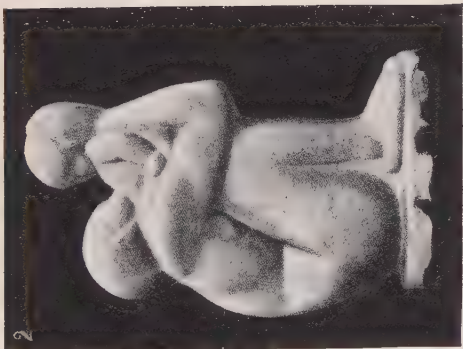
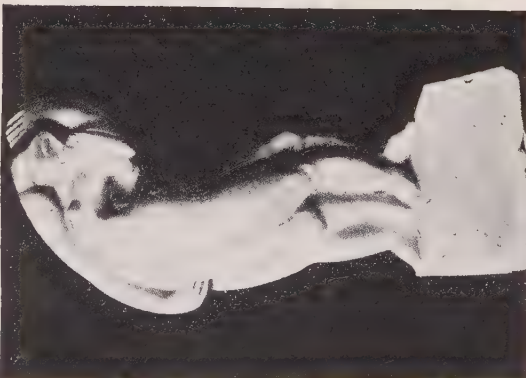
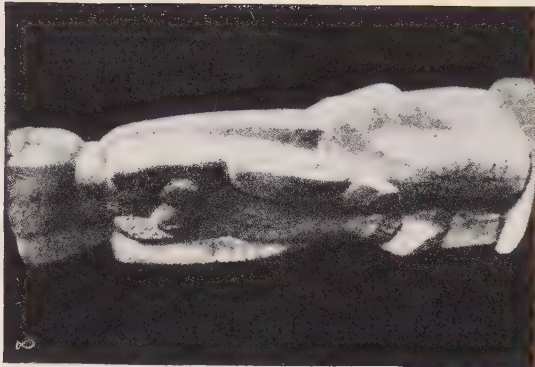


PLATE XXV

Greek Sculpture: the six examples range from the 6th Century B. C. to the eclectic school, which historians place somewhere between the Hellenistic and the Græco-Roman Periods.

No. 1, a draped female figure of the 6th Century B. C., typically archaic. It shows the direct attack of the early carver. Symmetrical, head to front, and well poised on powerful shoulders, hair and drapery precisely arranged—all done in conformity with traditional guild practices, much as were the figures at Chartres. Yet how serene and satisfying!

The Man with Calf (5) is likewise a forthright solution, well balanced, full of subtle contours, with harmonious rhythms of line and tone. It radiates the same hauntingly beautiful spirit as the draped woman; for, as Pansanias said, "these figures are strange to look upon, yet have a divine inspiration manifest within them."

The matchless panel (2) from the "Throne of Venus" needs no comment but may be noted as a superb example of an utterly satisfying symmetrical composition. The lovely Esquiline Venus (3) is by an eclectic. He was unfortunate in his selection of a supporting pedestal, and the head does not altogether consort with the figure. But he made a remarkably fine job of the latter. It has a voluptuousness the early Greeks avoided, but its rich full sections are contained within pure vase-like contours, and, of course, the figure itself supplied a splendid harmony of line and tone.

No. 4 is the Theseus from the Parthenon. Scarred and mutilated, it still remains an amazing tour de force. It shows a knowledge of the figure as profound as Rodin's or Michelangelo's and a serenity neither of these masters possessed. Contrasted with the archaic sculpture, it looks lifelike, but it is poles apart from the realism of later centuries. It does indeed mark the apogee from which Greek Sculpture declined toward a more and more devitalizing preoccupation with surface forms. Comparing it with the chariot attendant from Olympia (6) many will prefer the latter's simpler contours and less accurate but more powerful summarizations of anatomical detail.

It is difficult to make a choice between the subtle modelling and strange serenity of the calf-bearer, the powerful rhythms of line and plane in the Olympic figure (6), and the utter command of line and mass arrangement, the perfect fusion of the ideal and the naturalistic, in short, the godlike mastery of his craft that Phidias shows in the Theseus.

But just there we bring in wonder and awe to dilate our æsthetic reactions.

Choosing between the illustrations, I would prefer the sonant rhythms of the Charioteer. The less proficient sculptor still has reserves in hand: the tragedy of perfection is that it can promise no more.

PLATE XXV

Greek Sculpture, 6th to 3d Century B. C.

1. Archaic Figure, Athens, 6th Century B. C. (Alnari).
2. Throne of Venus, Rome, 5th Century (Brogi).
3. Esquiline Venus, Rome (Anderson).
4. Theseus, East Pediment of Parthenon, 5th Century B. C. (Alnari).
5. Votive Statue, Man and Calf, Athens, 6th Century B. C. (Alnari).
6. Charioteer, East Pediment, Olympia, 5th Century B. C. (Alnari).



PLATE XXVI

This plate shows a general trend in modern sculpture. It cannot pretend to trace even a small section of such a course. To get an idea of the rich variety and infinite promise of modern sculpture, the student must turn over the last dozen volumes of *Die Kunst* and *Art et Décoration*.

The three examples, 1, 2, and 3, show the return to simplifications and plain statements that marks the work of all the worthwhile sculptors of to-day.

Admitting that No. 2 pushes this to the verge and is inclined to be a trifle mannered, yet what a fine rhythm of line and mass remains to satisfy our longing for something more than a copy of the eternal model.

The solid but lovely little lady (1) should be compared with some of the tortured figures that came after Michelangelo. No. 3 is merely a "decorative" figure to grace a garden or an Exposition, but in its realization of form it compares very favourably with many an imperishable bronze we could name. Of course, all have the sensuous appeal that so horrifies some æsthetes, but that alone can never explain their potency. They have something of that music in them that one sensed in the pillars

and the capital on Plate XX. Perhaps it would be better if we could include a few bad or commonplace examples for comparison, but the student who will take the trouble to compare the magazines named above with their forerunners of twenty or thirty years ago will have all the confirmation he or she needs. At 5 we have an arresting silhouette by Metzner. The treatment of the drapery is a little obvious, but the powerful simplifications of line and form hold the interest.

Turning to the heads by Lehmbruck (4) and Kolbe (6) we find nothing of the healthy idealism of the Greeks, but in its place we have personal and unusual treatments. Lehmbruck's fine head shows the search for psychic and emotional interpretations to which modern artists turn. Compare them with the Clyties and Didos of yesteryear and see how they hold their own. Or, better still, look up the "Propylaen" treasure book of *Oriental Art** and see where the German artists seek inspiration to-day.

*Both Szdow's "Die Kunst der Nature Wolken und der Vorzeit" and Schafer-Andrae's "Die Kunst des Alten Orients" will be worth much effort to obtain a glimpse of them.

PLATE XXVI

Sculpture—Modern

- 1 and 2. Alfred Lorcher (*Die Kunst*).
3. Marcel Gimond (*Art et Décoration*).
4. Wilhelm Lehmbruck (*Die Kunst*).
4. Franz Metzger (*Die Kunst*).
6. Georg Kolbe (*Die Kunst*).



PLATE XXVII

The centre group shows the 5th Century B. C. sculptor near his best. Contrast the stately rhythms of this composition with the average "Fountain" figure of to-day, which reproduces, often very ably as to modelling, the artificial posing of a dancer in front of a camera, without, however, a hint of the continuity of movement, instinct in any figure in action, which even a good photograph at times suggests.

The Virgin and Child shows the charm and grace that crept into Gothic statuary in the 14th Century before it declined in the 15th. The figure is still compact and beautifully designed, though not so

powerful and moving in its line as earlier work.

How immeasurably superior it is to later work could be seen by contrasting it with Spanish baroque figures; one hesitates to suggest a comparison with the ecclesiastical "art" atrocities that are sold over the counter to-day like cheese or soap.

The third figure shows a similar tendency, on the part of the Greek sculptor, to bring divinities to earth. The goddess is less aloof than the dancing girl in the centre. Nevertheless, it is an exquisite and subtle thing, splendidly realized; still infinitely beyond the compass of the average sculptor of A. D. 1920-30.

PLATE XXVII

Sculpture – Greek and Gothic

1. French Gothic, Late 13th Century, Louvre (Bulloz).
2. Dancing Figure, Delphi, 5th Century (Alnari).
3. Venus, Rome, Greek, Late 5th Century (Anderson).

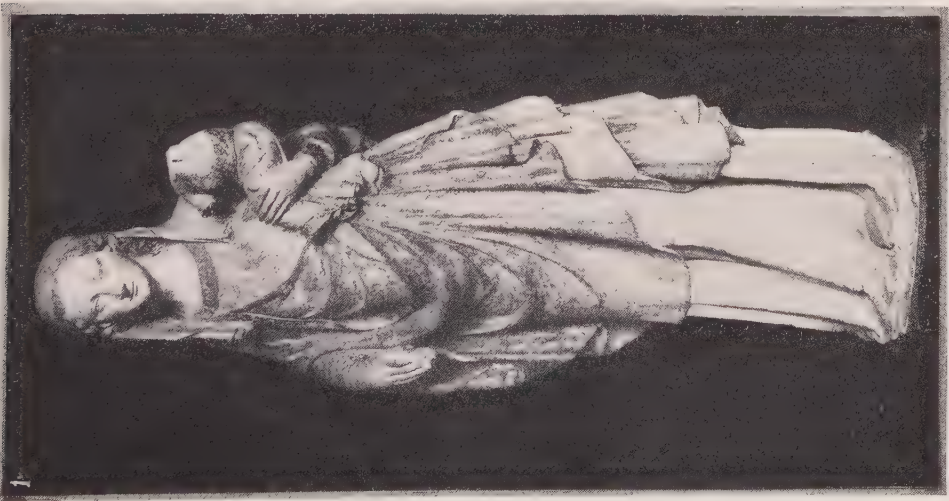


PLATE XXVIII

All the figures on this plate have the full rich sections of the true sculptor.

Their creators have been concerned with what one of them, Michelangelo, called their true function, "the elimination of superfluities." In his unfinished figure (2) he shows the full and sensuous forms of his later period; built up into a moving harmony of line and mass and tone.

The Greek brings to his work an exquisite finish of contour and section that only a sculptor can ap-

preciate; just as only a violinist appreciates in full the virtuosity of a master.

That such refinements are gained at the expense of the larger qualities we may see by comparing the Youth with the weight and mass and the sense of elemental strength that radiates from the Sitting Woman. The delicate flutelike notes of the Greek are drowned in Maillol's sonorous chimes.

But all three, in the arrangement of their lines and shapes and tones, are musical beyond the common run indeed.

PLATE XXVIII

Sculpture—Greek Renaissance and Modern

1. Greek, 4th Century. Boston Museum (Baldwin Coolidge).
2. Michelangelo, Unfinished Statue (Alnari).
3. Maillol, Sitting Woman (Druet).



PLATE XXIX

Nine very different details, from almost as many schools.

(1) Duccio: simple all-embracing curves which, with the heads and halos, set up a strong rhythm throughout. Such line arrangements and the satisfactory pattern of light-and-dark are not a difficult accomplishment for the modern artist. Where he fails is in the ability to duplicate the conviction and simple directness of the Primitive.

Beato Angelico (3) uses a similar but more subtle method, striking a different note with his flatter curves.

No. 2 is from a Pompeian fresco. Quite sophisticated compared with the Primitive, it shows a delicacy that Leighton or Bouguereau might have envied, combined with a solidity and decision they lacked. Note the extraordinarily sensitive line that runs from the woman's brow, over her profile, hand and arm, down by way of the child's head and elbow, to the ground. It is drawing as clever as that of Veronese (4) but less complex. In 4 we see a magnificent draughtsman and fine colourist a little too anxious to show his undoubted powers. One cannot airily dismiss him as a "sensuous Venetian." Though the bold pattern and simple directness of earlier frescoes have subsided to a lively sparkle, he has attained complete mastery of the third dimension.

Compare it with the work of the literal-minded Morelli (6). Here we find facial expression attempting to substitute for the dramatic rôle of fine line and notan. It is nothing more than a grandiose magazine cover—indeed, many covers are more artistic.

In the centre, El Greco: the ancestor of so many modernists. Even in this fragment one may sense something of the lambent quality of his lines and forms, that present an unexpected and often

baffling "going and coming" that suggests a fourth dimension.

Below is a lovely section from Pier della Francesca (8), between two strange companions. His pure lines, clear-cut shapes, and sparkling pattern are in striking contrast to the spirit that informs 7 and 8.

No. 7 is by Roualt, an uncommonly powerful and apparently perverse painter who is oblivious of beauty as humanity will always know it. His two figures will by many be condemned as immoral, sadistic, decadent, and so on. But do not let us make a too hasty judgment. Remember that Roualt has painted a Crucifixion which, for intensity of feeling and dramatic power, makes much of the current church decoration look like anæmic Christmas cards.

It would be as correct to call a murder trial, or *Hansard*, or the *Congressional Record* immoral. It is a blunt, unsparing chronicle of man's unquarable and tragic stupidity. To call it names is to rank one's self with the nice-minded who shut their eyes to unalterable biological facts. It is not Art, as I understand it, but it is a bleak, unvarnished commentary on one facet of life, fundamentally far more decent than the scriptural tags in yellow journals.

The detail at 9 shows another frank, almost brutal, treatment. Boldly patterned, all alive, and with the apparent disregard for correct drawing and the strange intensity that marks so much "modernist stuff," a character that often results from the artist's struggle with a stubborn or exacting medium, or the attempt to give plastic form to vivid ideas. It is a relief to find that it has had the sanction of museum authorities and the entrée to handbooks for many a long year. The signature on the back shows that it came from the factory of Maestro Giorgio of Gubbio (A. D. 1525).

PLATE XXIX

Painting—Comparative Details

1. Duccio.
2. Pompeian Fresco.
3. Beato Angelico.
4. Veronese.
5. El Greco.
6. Domenico Morelli.
7. Roualt.
8. Pier della Francesca.
9. Anonymous



PLATE XXX

It would require a few hundred composite plates to show the various notable and interesting tendencies to be observed in painting to-day.

This is, of course, not even an attempt to discuss them, but just an effort to compare two widely separated schools flourishing side by side in the 20th Century. To gather some idea of the variety, the richness, the vitality, and the power and scope of modern art, the student should get hold of the cheap monographs published in France and Germany; such as "Junge Kunst," "Der Kunstgeschichtliche," "Les Peintres Français Nouveaux," and the editions of G. Cres et Cie, Paris, and "Valori Plastici," Rome. If he gets no inspiration or excitement from them, his case is hard indeed.

At the top of Plate XXX we have two very stimulating and effective designs by Arthur Dove (1) and Georgia O'Keeffe (3). Both lose much through being deprived of their attractive colour. Both are very competent decorations, particularly suited to modern interiors, where pictures must strike a bolder note than did the delicate water colours and sombre oils of a hundred years ago.

The nice balance of line and mass and the avoidance of meaningless shapes and incoherent statements are as noticeable in 1 and 3 as in the clean handling of the head by Robert (2). All three are fine designs, well thought out and scrupulously finished.

Compare these three paintings with the two examples beneath. The Rembrandt sketch, boldly smashed in with a brush and left; a vital and interesting snapshot, but nothing uncommon for Rembrandt, or even a few other old masters of his day.

The Matisse (3) has the immediate appeal almost any strong blotting in of darks and light presents. But on closer inspection the shapes seem tentative, where not arbitrary, and, for me, at any rate, show an irritating indecision about their contours that gives rise to the suspicion that the looseness of the figure is due less to purposeful distortion than to incomplete realization. In such cases, it is no good to talk of Persian colour (a glance

at the superb Quaritch publication on Persian work, by F. R. Martin, will show the magnificent designs on which they lavished their rich pigments). To me it is an unsatisfactory work, but not less so than many by other masters that have of late been weightily discussed and copiously illustrated. It has been dwelt upon simply to give proportion to our criticisms.

Of course, the ultra-modern will aver that No. 2 is "emasculated," that "you could live with it," but it is not improbable that both were painted in the hope that someone would eventually provide them with a home; and why not? But to those who disagree, I would say, You have your choice; if you read into No. 4 qualities the more obvious 2 does not possess, you will be exercising one of the few remaining liberties left to the poor art lover. But don't expect me to believe that it has wonderful pattern, intense realization, childlike candour, and such like virtues. This, of course, is not to say that everything by Matisse is similarly ineffective. This example has been enlarged upon merely to stress the point that in our appreciation we should never attach qualities to names rather than works. Not all modern artists, any more than modern writers, produce a succession of invariably fine works—as a hen lays consistently fresh eggs—it is not as easy as all that. And, another platitude, unquestioning approbation is as bad for artists as it is for baseball idols.

There can, however, be little contention about the merits of Nos. 6 and 7. The Japanese artist's "fumpon" shows him in full command of his line: a skilful and fluent artist not yet denuded of his vigour. The galloping "pig," even through the medium of the devoted l'Abbé Henri Breuil copy, retains the amazing life and movement, the realization of much more than essentials that marked the art of the Cro-Magnon artist. The obvious enjoyment with which he painted the animals he hunted for a living proves that, immemorially before us, man had solved the problem of innocent and profitable employment of his leisure.

PLATE XXX

Painting and Drawing

1. Arthur Dove, Decorative Painting (A. Stieglitz).
2. Robert, Portrait. Druet.
3. Georgia O'Keeffe, Decorative Painting (A. Stieglitz).
4. Matisse, Sitting Woman (Druet).
5. Rembrandt, Sleeping Woman, Brush Drawing (Victoria and Albert Museum).
6. Japanese Horse (Miss Belle Boas).
7. Boar Galloping, Cave of Altamira.



PLATE XXXI

If the reader has followed us thus far with agreement, this plate will be superfluous. It is designed to show a few of the various maladies that debilitated painting and sculpture at different periods. European galleries, not to mention others, are full of such things, with which a few years ago they might have paid their national debts. Now we are beginning to find them out. But if this plate saves the reader some day from walking many miles through dull galleries, full of the curious and uncritical feeding on second-rate stuff, the money paid for this book will not have been wasted. And they will hasten the day when directors and curators will be forced to select their best works and display them as masterpieces need displaying, with due regard for the company they keep.

No. 1 gives a good idea of the all too easy rhythm that some painters developed after the High Renaissance. Line swirls into line, and the continuity, that in Michelangelo was a source of strength to the composition, here becomes mannered and obvious. No. 3 shows a very refined and adequately clothed Judith. The artist has concentrated upon the features, which he portrays admirably, and upon the imitation of textures, which he achieves superlatively. But his structure is weak and his notan lacks character. It would be an obvious gibe to suggest that here is the ideal magazine cover. But an understanding of the inflexible resolution and the intensive cultivation of

talent required to develop such a technique makes one regret that such perseverance should have been directed toward the mastery of non-essentials.

Guido Reni's composition (5) shows more eloquently than pages of writing the chasm that separated the early masters from their later followers. Practically every law of composition, and even of good taste, is violated here.

The case against the sculptor is even worse. Bernini's (2) affected and over-refined group succeeds in producing in marble what would have been better left in wax—though pretty poor stuff in any medium.

The detail from the Farnese Bull is a classic example of sculpture run amuck. (I wish a feeling of delicacy and the libel laws did not deter me from reproducing a few of the groups that grace our public places.) Compared with Canova's sugary types the individual figures are still solid, but the lack of any sort of fine relationship between lines and masses, and the total misconception of the function of the sculptor and the limitations of his medium are self-evident.

It remained for Dalou (who produced some of the most intimate and delightful bambinos ever modelled) to show how an incredibly skilful modeller may so de-compose his figures that the result is utterly lacking in any art quality. If you don't believe this yet, turn to Plates XXV and XXVI and reconsider.

PLATE XXXI

Painting and Sculpture—Decadent

1. Padovanino, Orpheus and Eurydice (Anderson).
2. Berini, Daphne and Apollo (Anderson).
3. Allori, Judith and Holofernes (Brogi).
4. The Farnese Bull, detail (Anderson).
5. Guido Reni, Atlanta (Brogi).
6. Dalou, Bacchus, detail (Ainari).

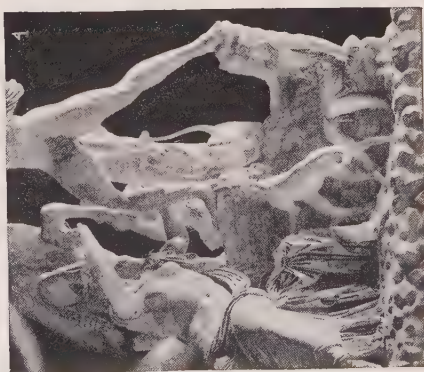


PLATE XXXII

Unhappily, upon this page, great masters have been crowded cheek by jowl until the Botticelli ladies look like veritable strap-hangers. We can only plead the inexorable limits of space, and ask the reader to use the peephole, as suggested at the beginning. Little can be said about them. Look at the unknown Primitive's (School of Giotto) treatment of light-and-dark and silhouette at No. 2. Note Pier della Francesca's fearless statements, his unhesitating acceptance of a definite edge to his shapes, the uncommonly striking pattern of light-and-dark that he weaves.

The very different, the more "feminine" (*circa* 1500), style of Botticelli, despite its utter refinement, still discloses a fine notan. Leonardo, in his handling of the latter problem, is more than faintly reminiscent of a fine Japanese treatment or a Chinese painting. His shapes, as we might expect from such a multiplex genius, are anything but

simple, yet full of character. (Compare them with Guido Reni's overleaf.)

Michelangelo shows the solid forms and the sonorous line and plane movements so typical of his work when, according to his own utterance, he was "wasting his time" in the Sistine Chapel. As a little exercise in observation, note how the line of drapery sweeps in a parabola round to the child's head to break up into short contrasting curves and angles. There is not a line or a space in this fragment, or in the whole chapel for that matter, that has escaped his eye.

Titian (6) is different again: sensuous in both form and pattern, his figures bathed in a luminous atmosphere, his rich and full oppositions of light-and-dark, and of line and plane movements suggest something of the recession that is the despair of so many modern artists.

PLATE XXXII

Painting—Italian

1. Pier della Francesca (Anderson).
2. Italian Primitive, School of Giotto (Louvre).
3. Botticelli, Detail of Spring (Anderson).
4. Leonardo da Vinci, St. Jerome (Anderson).
5. Michelangelo, Detail of the Flood (Anderson).
6. Titian, The Original Sin (Prado) (Anderson).

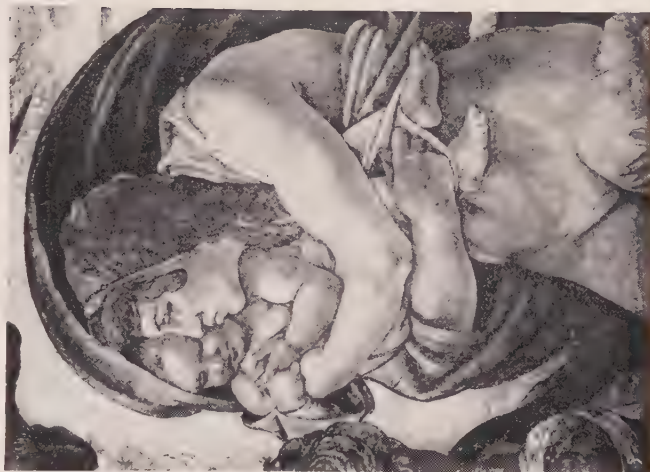


PLATE XXXIII

Here are four heads. At the top, a study in oils by Leonardo and a fresco by Michelangelo. The first, which, in the course of time, has been sadly chafed in places, is a painter's head, pure and simple. It lacks the Mona Lisa smile of the typical Leonardo, but as a solid and powerful piece of painting it would be hard to find its equal.

Its comparatively unfinished state—it does not show the impasto of his finished heads—suggests that he cast it aside to turn to other things, maybe a design for some new ordnance, a fortification or a flying machine—not realizing the worth of it; a suggestion which reminds one of Ruskin's saying that such splendid efforts were "essentially the work of people who felt themselves wrong; who are striving for the fulfilment of a law and the grasp of a loveliness which they have not yet attained."

Michelangelo (2) is striving no more, or if he

strives, the effort is not to be detected. He shows a haughty command of line and space and handles his notan in a faultless manner seen in art but once in a few hundred years.

Botticelli's head, despite its fine pattern, looks weak beside it, and this effect is due as much to the refined character of his line as to the type of head depicted.

Bellini, with his bold massing of the darks, and a poster-like simplicity of the design, builds up a beautifully painted and solid head, but despite the sensitive and interesting face, it has less soul to it, I think, than the Sybil above.

But all four heads are great—not to be duplicated easily to-day, and who could expect such achievements now? Art was a serious profession needing a severe apprenticeship in the 15th and 16th centuries, and the botegas weeded out all those who could not stick the course.

PLATE XXXIII

Painting—Four Heads

1. Leonardo da Vinci, Uffizi (Photo by Bulloz).
2. Michelangelo, Lybian Sybil, Sistine (Anderson).
3. Botticelli, Detail of Spring (Anderson).
4. Bellini, Louvre (Archives de France).



PLATE XXXIV

Here are four nudes. Each one strikingly different from its fellows.

Degas loses most by the transition from his gorgeous "pastel" colour to half-tone. Nevertheless, it is a splendid thing, with its stimulating oppositions of light-and-dark and its rich pattern. In No. 4 we see how Van Gogh's nervous brush work, searching for not wholly comprehended forms, builds up into a satisfying study.

Renoir succeeds miraculously in capturing the fleeting glamour of youth. Compared with his masterly handling, the figure by Matisse might be the product of a Neanderthal man: some might say, of a butcher seized with a frenzy for plastic expression. It is powerfully, one may say brutally, conceived; something elemental is stirring here, making not only Bouguereau and Cabanel, but even Gauguin and Van Gogh, taste a little sweetish. But is it necessary to go so far back?

"Within every notary," says Flaubert, "is the débris of a poet." An unhappy repression indeed

but possibly less fatal to the sister muse than such unbridled sublimations.

This is the second time we have verged upon lese-majesty with regard to Matisse, which is not to suggest that we do not take off our hat to the portrait on Plate II and other of his works.

But, reverting to subject matter again, other things being equal, the ideas behind a picture do count.

A man may paint the Immaculate Conception and achieve only a sugary sanctimony; another will endow the picture of a scrub-woman with a beauty acrid and piercing. But the swing from subject matter goes far enough. We can have too much of back-alleys and out-houses, blowsy women and unkempt proletarians. Subjects tolerable in print can be unendurable in paint. Occasionally one is able to smell fish without rubbing one's nose upon it, and sometimes one lifts up the eyes hoping for the sight of a faun or a goddess, a rain-washed mountainside or a windswept cloud.

PLATE XXXIV

Painting—Modern

1. Matisse.
 2. Degas.
 3. Renoir.
 4. Van Gogh
- (Photos by Druet).

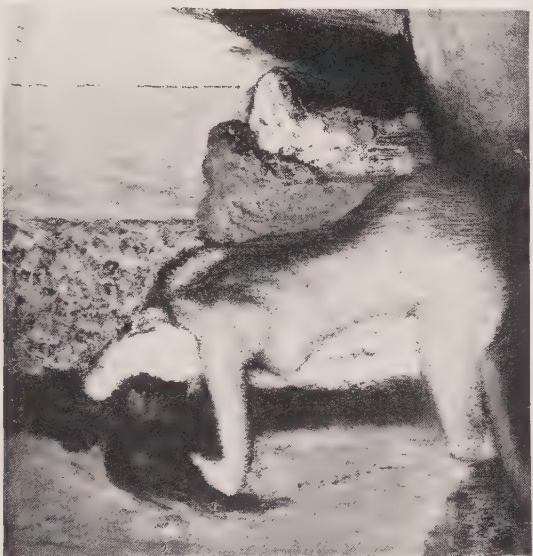


PLATE XXXV

The art of landscape painting is, of course, comparatively modern. Possibly, as life becomes more mechanized and noisy and people more standardized and quiet (?) we shall turn more and more to landscape for relief, as the citified Alexandrians turned to bucolics—though there is little sign of such a trend in the galleries at present. At any rate, after a plethora of figures, these landscapes provide a pleasant change.

Here we have two very different types, de Wint (1) frankly objective, limning the willows, the pastures, and the distant spires as fluently as he knew how.

Below (3) is Turner (J. M. W.) drawing, like the majority of artists, to please, because he must please to live, but, nevertheless, making a very creditable job of it. Structurally, there is in each a nice balance of line and mass. Even in the de Wint, the bulk of the trees is well held by the more interesting tower. There is a fine feeling for contours and shapes and a pleasant sparkle of light-and-dark. Both are excellent examples of this charming art as it flourished about a hundred years ago.

And if to such attractions they add the compelling force of early associations, are we to turn them down, at the bidding of the aesthete, in favour of a work with more "dynamisme," "significant form," "spatial relationships," and a few other things not even Cézanne worried about? I think not. Let us reserve a little corner for such past things, though we need not go to sleep there. The critic who talks with such virility about the weakness of "turning one's back on life" may possibly enjoy the *mise-en-scène* of the modern industrial town, but sometimes such a turning is rather back to life, or periods when it seemed more rounded, and less fretted and futile than it does at times to-day.

And these two landscapes conspire with our unreason to convince us that life was like that—pastoral, picturesque, and calm. Looking at them we feel, despite the evidence of Cobbett and the researches of the Hammonds, that the countryside was peopled by happy peasants working contentedly for benignant and paternal squires—(with which latter our lot would naturally have been cast)—in short, that everything was as lovely as the scenes depicted. Happy are we when we can indulge this fancy with two such fine compositions as 1 and 3. Having thus sentimentalized, let us turn to Nos. 2 and 4.

In 4 we see Cézanne, preoccupied with knocking a hole in his canvas. And he succeeds far better than Turner. Here we have an artist utterly unconcerned with the picturesque, intent upon "realizing" the first thing to hand; a turn of the road, a corner of a yard, a glade, an old shed, or a commonplace view; anything served. Before you condemn such an un-traditional style, you should look up some of Cézanne's paintings, or, failing that, consult Meier Graefe and Vollard, then turn to some good orthodox landscapes and notice how painty and flat they look—since Cézanne. There's no doubt that he's a disturbing old fellow, but, nevertheless, there are more things in our philosophy of art than recession in pictures.

Subject matter should never intrude; of course that is by now an axiom, or a cliché. But let us get these things into right perspective. Cézanne, like Renoir, had a whole-souled devotion to his art rare in these diverting times. It placed him with the select band that towers above the ruck. Without some understanding of Cézanne the works of most of the moderns that count will resemble uncut books. Yet he himself recorded that he was the primitive of his school—and we might even recall his regrettable admission before a Bouguereau. Like every pioneer he died without realizing the full potentialities of the new territories he opened up.

We imagine him upon the slopes of Olympus, under a tree loaded with green apples, admitted to the Old Masters Club (after a protest by Turner and the accepted resignation of McWhirter), discussing the Landscape of the future, and agreeing that it must show the breezy movement and sparkle of Constable, the pattern of Cotman, the dignity of Claude, plus the colour and depth relationship of Cézanne; all leavened with the intensity of Kokoschka. An impossible aspiration?

And as to that ideal, Vlaminck (2) seems to come nearer realizing it than any on this page.

His composition is compact, scholarly without being schoolish; his technique is adequate to all demands; he shows a real feeling for depth, and to these things he adds an emotional quality that imbues his houses with personality. Dramas could be played out under such roofs, and he leaves us weaving romance along the wet and windy road. But we have said enough; for we remember Eric Gill's remark that "the artist does the work and the critic has the inspiration."

PLATE XXXV

Painting—Landscape, 19th and 20th Centuries

1. Gloucester Cathedral, Peter de Wint (Victoria and Albert Museum).
2. Houses, Vlaminck (Druet).
3. Liber Studiorum . J. M. W. Turner (Victoria and Albert Museum).
4. Woodland Glade, Cézanne (Bulloz).



PLATE XXXVI

We have already discussed the first picture on this plate at some length, and masterpieces are not things to be explained in words. I hope by now the reader will not need such feeble aid.

But here is a master whose long apprenticeship at his trade had provided him with a fine technique that he was too honest to abuse. His intensity of feeling gives a palpable aura to his work, yet he subdued his personality to the dictates of his subject matter. In his pungent line and severe silhouette, with rich but sombre colours he sounds a note to give us pause, amidst a devastating chatter about art, to ponder upon the futility of little things; for here, surely, was a master who had known sorrow and had seen the rigour of death.

Titian strikes another chord; more orchestral in his superb command of line and mass and colour; less vivid and intense in his realization. He bathes his figures in a golden glow, amazes with the easy assurance of his drawing and modelling, the fluent handling of tone and mass.

Here is the refulgence that gathers round the setting sun, more glorious than in full noon, but

already presaging the twilight that will follow. In each case, we are in the presence of a Master; all we can do is to wait until they speak.

The inclusion of a second religious subject upon this plate was in some respect fortuitous. Having decided that the French Primitive could on no account be left out, the Titian seemed the only companion fit to consort with it on all points.

But already others suggest themselves, and scores of indispensable examples spring to mind, all unavoidably crowded out. Already illusory visions of another compilation project themselves; plates with but one or two examples; the cream of the Primitives, some Egyptian wall paintings and Hindu carving; an impressive Kenzan, a fine Gothic tapestry panel, a gem of Persian miniatures; the list stretches out into infinity, and still we have untouched the treasures of the great Moderns that unavoidably find no place in this volume.

But here we are, at the end, a fate that sooner or later overtakes all books, good or bad; I can only hope that the reader, like myself, is a little loath to see—FINIS.

PLATE XXXVI

Painting

1. Pietá, School of Avignon, French Primitive, Louvre.
2. The Entombment, Titian, Louvre (Photos, Archives de France).











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